Saturday 2 January 2016

Amateur Photographer

Passionate about photography since 1884

PowerShot G5 X Canon's best premium compact camera yet?

Small world

Our **expert guide** to shooting bugs using **focus stacking**

Front runner

Craig Roberts on why he thinks foreground interest is overrated

Best of the RPS

Our picks from the **158th print exhibition**

LENS TEST We put the **Fujifilm 35mm f/2** through its paces

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7days

A week in photography

We can change our lives or take up a new challenge at any time, but there's something about a new year that makes such resolutions a bit more special. Photographic ones can help to give our hobby a greater sense of purpose and direction. Last year I decided to shoot film for the first time in a decade. I bought a Nikon FM2 and some Kodak Tri-X and off I went. You can find out how I fared on page 8.

This year I am planning to print more of my images, whether on sheets of paper or in photo books, rather than just imprisoning them in suspended animation in the dark recesses of my hard drives, only coming to life when electricity is passed through them. What's your photographic resolution going to be for 2016? If you're stuck for ideas you'll find plenty of suggestions in this issue. Let us know what you decide and how you get on.
Nigel Atherton, Editor

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ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK

© PHILIP WILSON

IMAGES MAY BE USED FOR PROMOTION PURPOSES ONLINE AND ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Untitled by Philip Wilson

Nikon D3200, 18mm, 1/100sec at f/5, ISO 200

Sometimes we can utilise art and photography in an attempt to communicate something that is perhaps difficult to describe through words. Such is the case with this unusual image by Philip Wilson.

'My photography often reflects a dream-like state influenced by my own experiences with sleep paralysis,' says Philip. 'Throughout my work I have tried to recreate the surreal, daunting and isolated feeling that comes with the condition.'

Sleep paralysis is a subject that seems to be getting a lot of coverage at the moment, with films and music taking this often frightening condition as inspiration.

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Via our online communities Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or the gallery on our website. See details above.
Transparencies/prints Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 17.

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NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Chris Cheesman

Mamiya buyout

Phase One has taken over Mamiya Digital Imaging Company (MDI), having held 45% of shares in the camera maker since 2009. This has led to the formation of Phase One Japan. Appointed president Makoto Honda said: 'Phase One Japan is committed to developing new and custom-designed masterpiece leaf-shutter optics.' Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

© PIXABAY

Envy-driven editing

Around one in three Britons edits photos before posting them online, a survey has claimed. According to a poll of 10,000 people across the UK by Digitalab, almost a fifth (19.6%) edited photos to enhance their professional image and 18.1% to make themselves look more attractive.

Leica S upgrade

The AF speed and precision of the Leica S has been boosted via a new firmware update. Leica S (Typ 007) firmware update 2.0.0.1 is also designed to optimise white balance with manually entered colour temperature values. This should help deliver more precise skin-tone rendition when using flash. For full details visit uk.leica-camera.com.

Lytro 'breakthrough'

Lytro has launched a tool for the Illum it claims will deliver 'breakthrough depth-editing' capabilities'. The Desktop 5.0 update features DepthFX that, claims Lytro, makes chroma-keying unnecessary. Chroma-key editing allows a coloured background to be replaced with a background of choice. Lytro Desktop 5.0 for the Lytro Illum is free for Windows users from http://illum.lytro.com/desktop.

Drone backpack

The Manfrotto D1 Drone Backpack 'all-in-one' carry system is designed for quadcopters such as the DJI Phantom 3. It also has room for a DSLR, a laptop and a tripod. The drone propellers sit outside the bag. The D1 Drone Backpack costs £159.95. For details visit www.manfrotto.co.uk.

© MIKAEL BUCK/SONY

WEEKEND PROJECT

Start a photo project

Every time you get an opportunity to get out with your camera, rather than aimlessly shooting for the sake of it, why not set yourself the challenge of a long-term project that you can work on and build up over the course of this year? While there's no denying the joy of capturing a stunning one-off image, a coherent body of work will produce a much more satisfying sense of achievement.

Shooting a photo project offers a number of benefits, and does away with the ever-occurring problem of what to shoot. It should keep your motivation high, as enthusiasm for the project will drive you on. Ultimately, if you're passionate about your subject, this should carry through to your images and make you a stronger photographer.

1 Think very carefully about the subject matter you're going to base your project on. It's a good idea to have a keen interest in whatever it is you're planning to shoot. This will help you when things may not go as planned.

2 Think about the access you need – if it's going to be a mission to get into somewhere or find people to photograph every time you want to go out and shoot, the project will die a death before you've even started.

BIG picture

British photographer explores the Vatnajökull glacier in Iceland

The image you see here is part of a series of photographs taken in Iceland's otherworldly ice caverns. The cave's bright-blue and bubble-like walls almost resemble an underwater scene. Many of the other images capture flowing waterfalls, crystal-clear crevasses and icy tunnels. Icelandic guide Einar Runar Sigurdsson and British photographer Mikael Buck, (who, incidentally, photographed the cover this week) explored the world of Iceland's Vatnajökull glacier using Sony's back-illuminated full-frame sensor featured in the small-form Alpha 7R II camera. The images were taken without a tripod and were not pan-stitched in post. For contrast, take a look at Mikael's macro work on pages 27-29.

Words & numbers

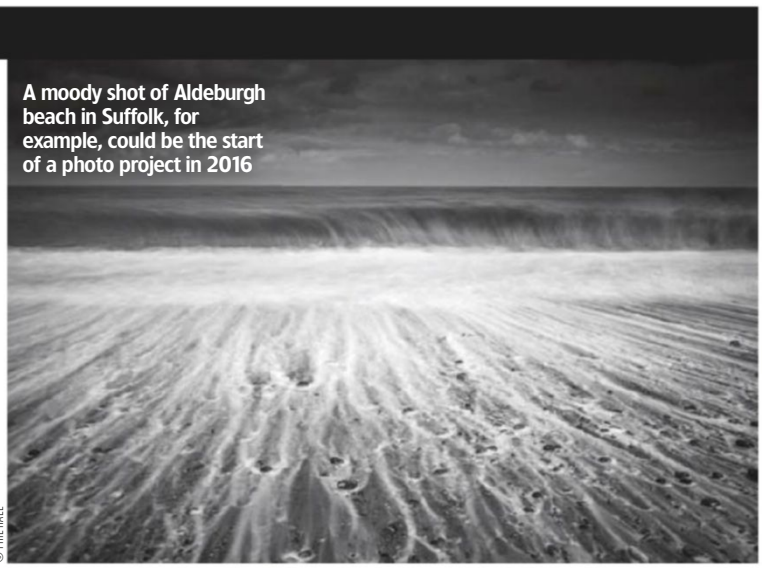
Photography takes an instant out of time, altering life by holding it still

Dorothea Lange
American documentary photographer
1895-1965

18
new sizes of Marumi filters (37mm-105mm) launched by Kenro. Visit www.kenro.co.uk

3 Consider the style and approach you're going to apply to the project – experiment with some techniques before you commit, and test out two or three ideas before you decide on your chosen project.

4 Consider how many images you want to end up with and if a narrative is required. Think about how long you're going to give yourself to complete the project and how you intend to share the set of final images.



A moody shot of Aldeburgh beach in Suffolk, for example, could be the start of a photo project in 2016

© PHIL HALL

© DON McCULLIN, COURTESY HAMILTONS GALLERY, LONDON

A Palestinian woman returning to ruins of her house in Sabra, Beirut, Lebanon, 1982

Digital photos 'can't be trusted', says McCullin

DIGITAL photography can be a 'lying experience', says famed war photographer Don McCullin.

Speaking at an event to promote Photo London 2016 at Somerset House in London, where the photographer will take centre stage next May, McCullin added: 'The whole thing can't be trusted.'

Speaking earlier, McCullin explained that his decision to return to the Iraq war zone a few years ago enabled him to see events 'first hand', rather than having to rely on images published by the media.

McCullin's comments came soon after Reuters confirmed it had banned freelance photographers from sending images as raw files.

Reuters moved to tackle photographers' use of image enhancement by demanding freelance photographers send in only images as JPEGs.

A Reuters UK spokesman told AP: 'As eyewitness accounts of events covered by dedicated and responsible journalists, Reuters Pictures must reflect reality. While we aim for photography of the highest aesthetic quality, our goal is not to artistically interpret the news.'

© DON McCULLIN, COURTESY HAMILTONS GALLERY, LONDON

Near Checkpoint Charlie, Berlin, 1961

However, not everyone agrees with McCullin's remarks, including AP forum user RogerMac, who pointed out that film images were not immune to manipulation. 'The only thing that seems to have changed is that with digital it has become easier,' he wrote.

Fellow forum user Benchista posted: 'He's quite right about digital photography. He's simply omitted to say the same thing about film photography. There's never been any guarantee of truth in photography.'

Digital manipulation of press photos has led to controversy in recent years. In November 2015, the Australia-based Nikon-Walkley Awards was forced to issue a statement about an altered image after photographer David Caird inadvertently entered a manipulated photograph.

As far back as 2006, a Reuters' photographer was sacked for digitally 'doctoring' two images, which seemingly exaggerated the impact of Israeli air strikes on Lebanon.

At the end of 2015, organisers from World Press Photo released a code of ethics in a bid to ensure entrants provide an 'accurate and fair representation of the scene they witnessed so the audience is not misled'.

The guidelines state, for example, that entrants must ensure there are no material changes to content and they do not 'intentionally contribute to, or alter, the scene they picture by re-enacting or staging events'.

Last year, one in five images that reached the penultimate round of World Press Photo were rejected on grounds that manipulation compromised their integrity.

Twenty entries were stopped from reaching the final stages.

Londoners 'least happy' in selfies

LONDONERS have the gloomiest faces in selfies, according to a study of six cities worldwide.

The 'selfiecity' project used face-recognition software to establish that Londoners had the 'least happy faces'.

More Londoners than elsewhere were pictured wearing glasses (29% compared to 18% in other cities).

The capital also had the most people with their eyes closed.

The team analysed 152,462 Instagram images taken in central London from 21-27 September 2015.

The project also studied Bangkok, Berlin ,New York, São Paulo and Moscow.

Selfiecity London forms part of an exhibition at Somerset House, which runs until 28 February 2016.

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© ASHLEY WEE

Ashley Wee bagged the £5,000 award with this shot of a turtle in the Bahamas

Amateur scoops Out of the Blue photo award

AN IMAGE of a turtle surfacing for air has won the Out of the Blue photography competition for a Canadian amateur photographer.

Ashley Wee, 26, won the £5,000 top prize with an image she captured off the coast of Nassau, Bahamas.

The environmental photography contest was organised by the Prince of Wales's International Sustainability Unit and was open to Commonwealth citizens.

Commenting on the photo, Ashley – a biology graduate who had spotted a group of six or seven turtles while snorkelling – said: 'As we drifted within a few feet of them, these turtles were not disturbed by human presence as they maintained a quiet and natural demeanour.

'One in particular caught my attention, as it was bobbing at the surface. It made me think about this animal and how it was affected by things both above and below the ocean.'

Hanli Prinsloo, a freediver and one of the judges, said: 'What immediately captivated me... was the implied vulnerability of the animal. The neck stretched up to the sky, the mouth slightly open and the implied gasp for air.

'In many ways, for me, this embodies the state of our oceans: vast, simple but vulnerable.'

Ashley received her award from the Prince of Wales at the Maritime Museum in Malta.

To view the best entries from the competition, visit http://outoftheblue competition.com.

44% of Brits have 'lost' a digital photo

ALMOST half of British adults have lost digital images, a Jessops' survey has revealed.

Jessops said: '44% of British adults have lost a digital photo that they wish they had printed, with "losing/breaking hardware" and "accidentally deleting the photos" being the most common ways of losing digital photos (20% each).'

Jessops added: 'More than one in ten (12%) have lost digital photos due to technology changes, eg old digital photos saved not being compatible with new technology.'

© GETTY IMAGES

Less than one in ten (8%) said they print a photo at least once a month, and more than one in five (21%) admitted to never having printed.

Jessops CEO Neil Old said: 'It is staggering that so many of us have lost some of our precious digital photos, while ironically photos stashed in old boxes by parents and grandparents are still here today.'

The survey of 2,192 adults, which was carried out by YouGov in November, coincided with the launch of Jessops' 'mobile-friendly' website for ordering prints.

For the latest news visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Get up & go

The most interesting things to see, to do and to shoot this week. By Oliver Atwell

LONDON

© ALEC SOTH

Gathered Leaves: Photographs by Alec Soth

Recently described by *The Telegraph* as the greatest living photographer of America's social and geographical landscape, Alec Soth is showing his work at the Science Museum, including his experimental approach to books, magazines and digital forms.

Until 28 March, £8, www.sciencemuseum.org.uk

MANCHESTER

Photo Walk

If you're in the area, then why not go for a photographic walking tour in Manchester with photography tutor and writer Aidan O'Rourke. The walk combines handy tips for improving your photography with a lovely sightseeing tour of the great city.

10 January, www.aidan.co.uk/manchester-photo-walk

LONDON

© LEE MILLER ARCHIVES

Lee Miller

It's not often we get to see Lee Miller's incredible images hanging on gallery walls, so take a look now at Lee Miller: A Woman's War at the Imperial War Museum, London.

Until 24 April, £5-7, www.iwm.org.uk

RUTLAND

© TERRY MITCHAM

Birdwatching

These three-hour walks are led by Terry Mitcham, the bird recorder of Rutland Natural History Society, and a very experienced birdwatcher and author. This could be just what you need to brush up on your bird photography.

29 January, www.rutlandwater.org.uk/events

Don McCullin

While Don McCullin is known best for his often-harrowing documents of war, this Hauser & Wirth exhibition, called Conflict – People – Landscape, also finds space to display his more recent work.

Until 31 January, www.hauserwirth.com

SOMERSET

© JOEL MEADOWS

Viewpoint
Nigel Atherton

Nigel Atherton reflects on how his recent re-acquaintance with the classic Nikon FM2 has taught him a few things about his older self

Earlier this year, I went back to my photographic youth and bought a Nikon FM2. I bought it not just to shoot film with after more than a decade of digital capture, but also to get back to basics with an all-manual camera after years of using, effectively, a computer with a lens on the front.

I love technology, but I've also missed the purity of the FM2. Perhaps it's the nostalgia that it evokes for simpler times. It's a beautiful camera and, if anything, it has grown more attractive with age. That isn't just my opinion – it turns heads when I'm out with it in a way that no DSLR does.

Film still has much to recommend it. For a start, it liberates the user from digital's endless decision-making, the pages of menus and multitudinous buttons to check to ensure that they're set correctly, and the tyranny of constant battery charging. It offers freedom from the need for a computer, and the time-sucking chore of post-processing.

But in using the FM2 I have also learned things about myself. First, manual focusing with an SLR is no longer the joy to me that it once was when my eyesight was better and my subjects snapped crisply into focus on the ground-glass screen at the turn of the lens. Nowadays there's a lot more toing and froing of the focus ring as I struggle to differentiate between almost in focus and pin sharp. I find myself wishing it had focus peaking, like modern EVFs do. With moving subjects my hit rate is poor – although I don't, of course, get to find out just how poor until much later.

Which leads me to my second point. Technology has made me impatient. I've become so used to instant, pixel-based gratification that it's frustrating not being able to see immediately the shots I've just taken. So much so, that I've taken to duplicating on my iPhone the pictures I shoot on the FM2. Sometimes the iPhone version has been on Facebook within minutes.

Until recently we had no choice but to wait for our pictures until we could get to a lab or our darkroom, but now we're spoilt. The waiting game forced upon me by the FM2 is fun for a while, but short of a zombie apocalypse (or, more realistically, a mental detox from the high-speed pace of modern life) I could never permanently forego the instant feedback of digital capture any more than I could re-adapt to having to traipse to the library to find information, instead of having the entire internet on the phone in my pocket.

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 17 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

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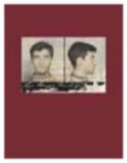
New Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography. By Oliver Atwell

Mexican Crime Photographs

By Stefan Ruiz, Gost Books, £26.36, hardback, 188 pages, ISBN 978-1-91040-104-0



FLEA markets and second-hand stores can offer treasures. Time and again throughout the world we have seen incredible discoveries of images and documents of historic worth tossed out by people either ignorant or uncaring of their value. This book, a series of images from the archive of photographer and collector Stefan Ruiz, is a perfect example. It was in 2010 that Stefan made his discovery as he was browsing the stalls of La Lagunilla, one of Mexico City's largest flea markets. Over the following months, he purchased hundreds of these prints, many of which consisted of mugshots and crimes in progress. Each of the images was taken from the 1950s to the 1970s. On the surface, this is a book that features some interesting vintage images, but on a deeper level the collection illustrates a society that, in the eyes of the rest of the world, is unfairly defined by its criminal element. It's also a nice look at how easily we elect our villains to status of hero. It's difficult not to feel a tinge of seduction when flicking through the mugshots. This really is a fascinating and nicely produced book, and well worth your time. ★★★★★

Penn Station, New York

By Louis Stettner, Thames & Hudson, £35, hardback, 112 pages, ISBN 978-0-50054-450-1

LOUIS Stettner is one of the last living members of the avant-garde New York School of Photography. This collection of images was captured in the 1950s and documents New York's now-vanished Penn Station. While the station still exists, what this project documents is the station in its original form, a structure that became too expensive to maintain. At the time, these images were not deemed newsworthy, and remained unseen for many years. However, the project is now considered a major work of art and, as a result, we have this book – one that deals with the ghosts of memory. The black & white images are haunting in their strange imperfections. Forms and shapes bleed into one another to create almost abstract representations of the space and the commuters who tread its platforms. This is a vital work that will only grow in importance as time goes on. ★★★★★

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Camera Photographer GOOD SERVICE AWARD 2015 GOLD

Distant subjects

The brain can be made to ignore the lack of foreground if the main focal point is strong enough to draw the eye to it without an obvious beginning. The other job of foreground is to give balance to the scene, so the main focal point doesn't dominate the picture. Landscape photography is all about balance, but as we work our way to the horizon, the main subject may still be quite small within the frame and therefore not shout for attention, despite having the picture to itself.

A strong focal point often eliminates the need for any prominent foreground feature. Even a bare foreground, if relevant to the overall image, can be used effectively in this way. Let your main focal point draw the viewer in, but in such a way that it is slow and considered.

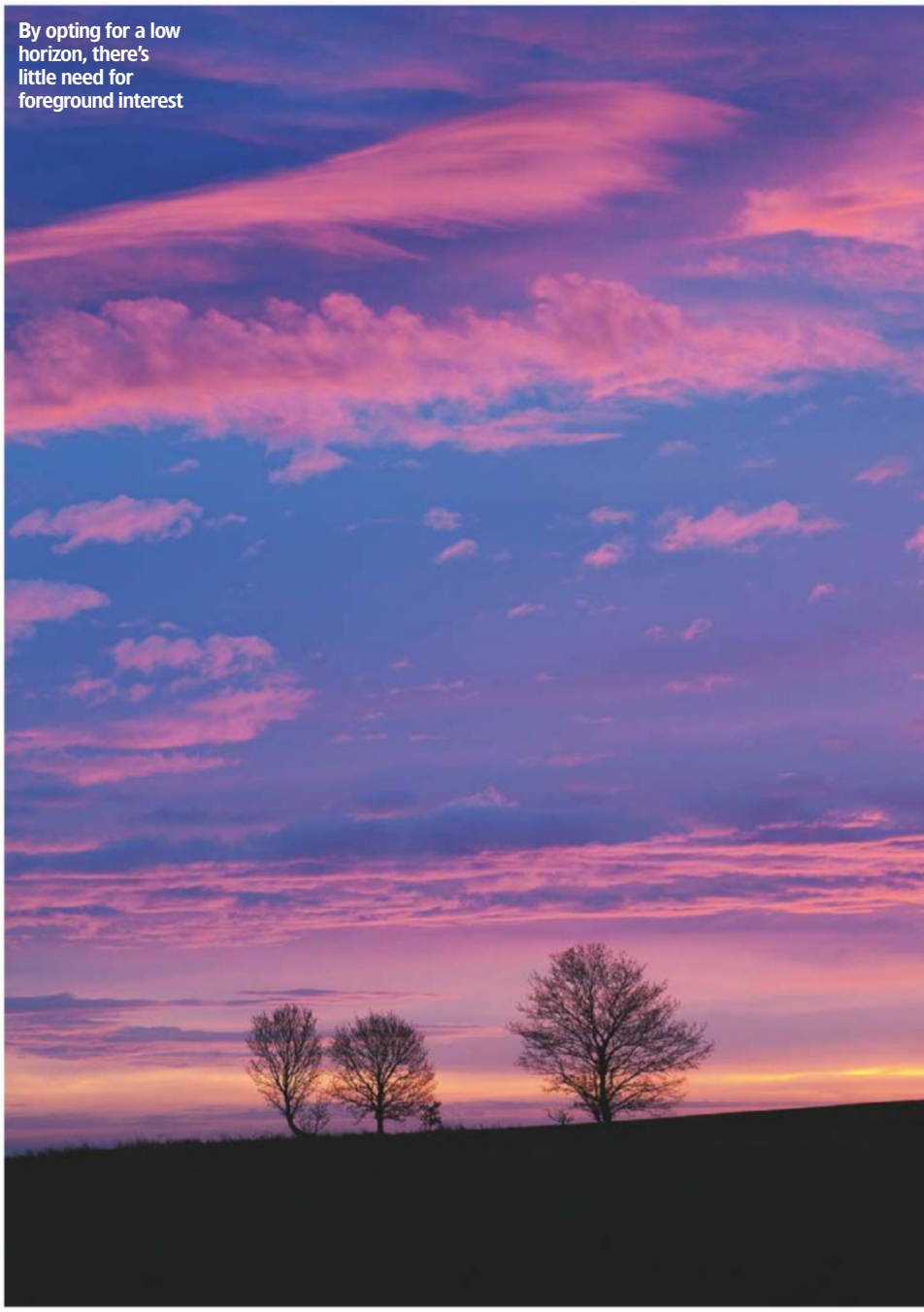
Forget Foreground

Can a landscape image still engage the viewer without foreground interest? **Craig Roberts** believes it can

Craig Roberts
Craig is a professional photographer specialising in travel and landscape. He regularly writes technique articles for photography magazines and offers these, along with videos and eBooks, as part of his e6 Subscription available from his website. Visit **www.craigrobertsphotography.co.uk**

In almost every article written about the art of landscape photography, we are told that foreground is key and that it is the most essential part of the overall composition. Without it, we are told, the image is dead, lifeless and lacks depth. Foreground is the start of the journey through the picture, and a successful landscape photograph cannot survive without it. But is foreground overrated and possibly unnecessary in landscape photography? If you look beyond the obvious and compose your images with depth and impact, yet feature no obvious foreground element, can your images still be seen as successful? Does it still engage and invite the viewer into the scene? Perhaps, in fact, foreground is the least important aspect and we can do without it.

This may be playing devil's advocate, and I'm sure many would argue the case for foreground with confidence, but I believe it's possible to compose a successful image without foreground. There are several ways to create an engaging composition yet not be influenced by a prominent foreground feature. It's all about adapting your technique and taking time to look beyond the foreground into the middle distance.



By opting for a low horizon, there's little need for foreground interest

With a lack of foreground, the sky and distant elements become dominant

ALL PICTURES © CRAIG ROBERTS

The low horizon

An immediate way of completely eliminating the foreground is by composing with a low horizon, applying the rule of thirds composition technique. In this case the sky and any distant elements become dominant features and the main focal point. Any foreground included acts as a base and reference point for the higher view. It's used only as a sense of scale and serves no purpose of leading the eye into the picture.

In such examples the image is kept strong with the low horizon position and breaks the rules to a certain extent by including so much sky. However, the rule of thirds composition keeps a two-thirds balance on the main feature and creates an overall composition that is pleasing to the eye.

Vertical formats

Swapping from a horizontal format to a vertical one is often done when there is a prominent foreground feature that you want to exploit. Shooting with an elongated frame allows more foreground to be included into the picture and starts the visual journey close to the bottom of the frame. It could be said that this vertical format requires even more foreground, rather than less.

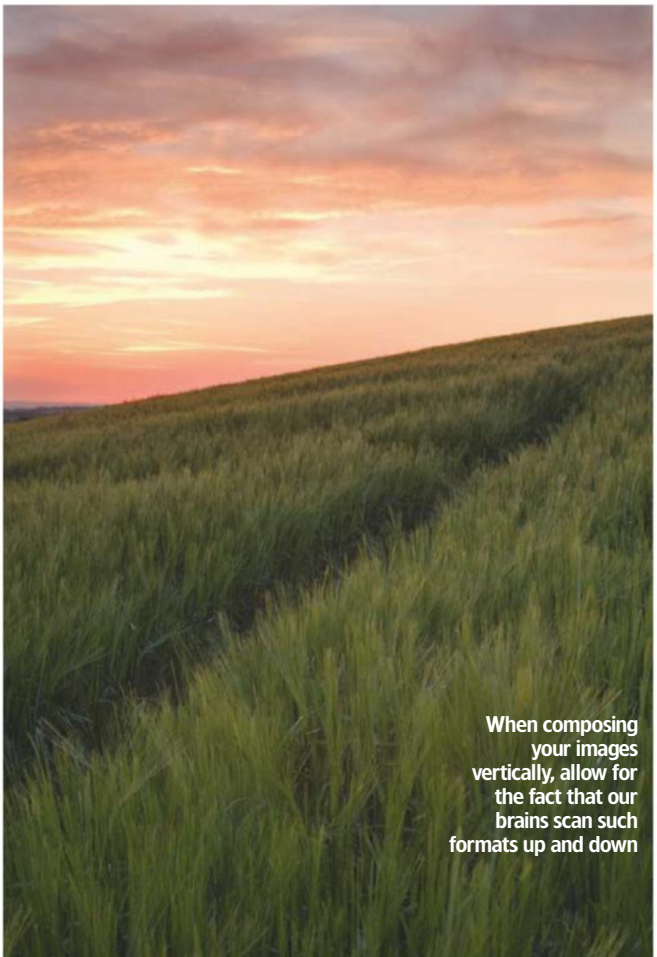
However, this is another example where that 'suggested' foreground could work. You are allowing a longer lead-in time before the viewer reaches the main focal point in the distance, so the eye is naturally drawn from the bottom to the top of the picture.

We don't naturally view the world in this format, as our vision is purely horizontal and even panoramic with peripheral vision. Presented with a vertical image, our brain scans up and down to take in this odd view. Compose your image to allow for this and your foreground can be left empty so the eye is not drawn back down the image after it reaches the distant focal point, as it would be if foreground were included.

Natural elements

Without an obvious rock, path or fence, you can still use the natural landscape as an inconspicuous foreground and a lead-in to the image. Mother Nature works her magic in lots of wonderful ways and the way the landscape is etched out in front of us can be more than enough to add to our compositions. Thus a subtle approach to foreground gives the suggestion of leading the eye into the shot and provides enough interest without the viewer realising the foreground is predominantly empty.

The way the wind moves over any flowing and non-fixed feature can add a subtle ingredient to a picture. Any long grass or crop field is given some life, while a beach becomes a moving trail of particles of sand where imaginary lines are created that disappear when the wind drops again. These brief moments where nature interacts with your chosen scene provides enough drama and interest to dispose of any traditional solid foreground feature and will be unique to your moment of capture.

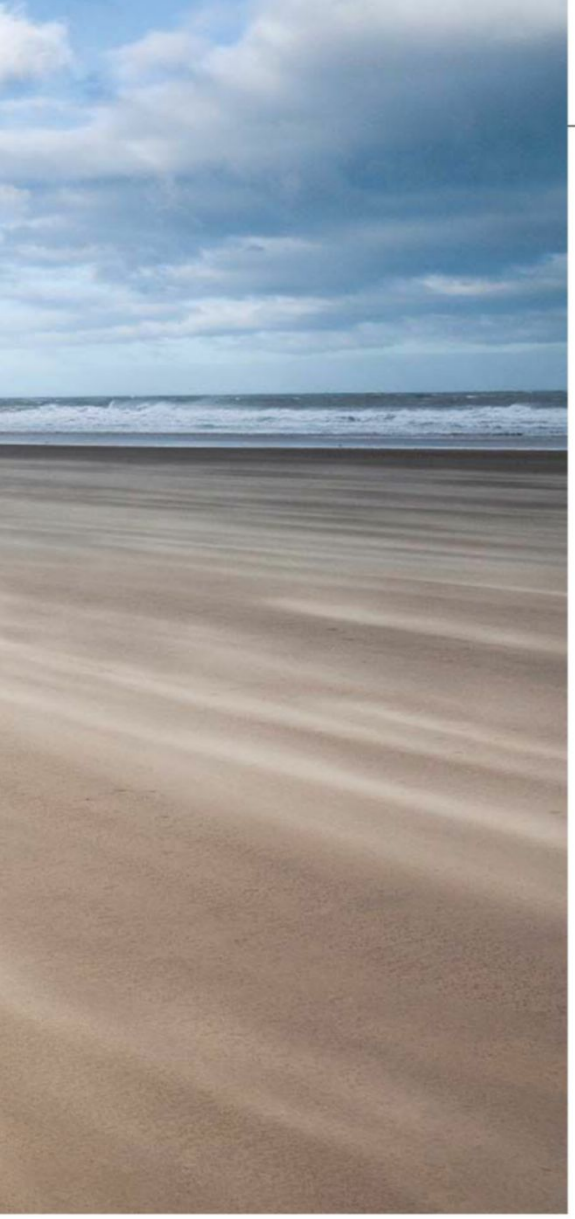


When composing your images vertically, allow for the fact that our brains scan such formats up and down

The suggested foreground

Without any obvious foreground you can still compose your image using the lie of the land to lead the eye to the main focal point. It's as if the foreground element is there, but has been removed at the last moment. In the same way that the brain completes missing letters in a familiar word, it responds to this missing element. The rest of the photograph and the way the landscape is formed 'suggests' that this is the start of the image. The eye is then drawn to the next available element, as if by accident, with the negative space offering the brain nothing to hang onto and therefore it quickly bypasses this for something more interesting.

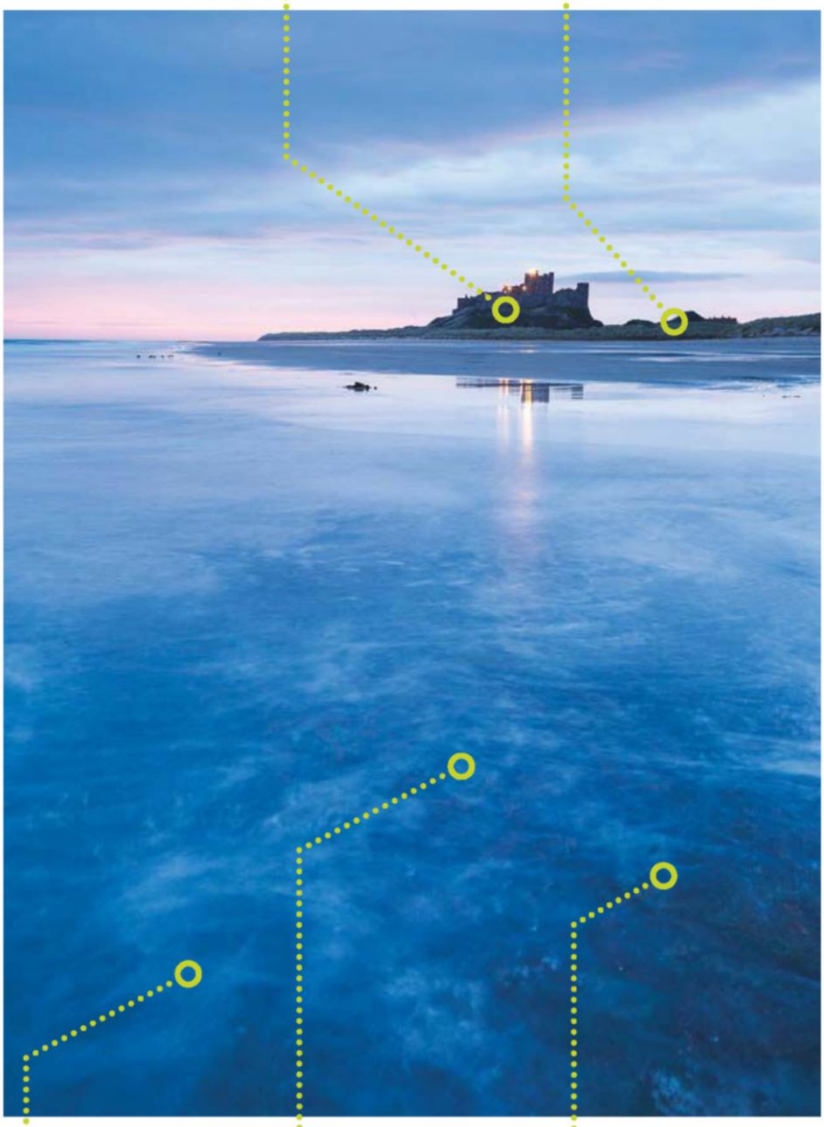
This way of composing is not a bland shot without a foreground – the landscape needs to be shaped and formed. But be aware that only certain scenes will allow such a composition and it's no excuse to exclude the foreground from a shot.



Without any obvious foreground element, you can trick the eye into thinking there is something there

Why it works

Let's take a closer look at why this shot, that appears to be devoid of any foreground interest, is still a successful landscape image



1 Strong distant subject

A dominant and even distinctive main subject is a natural focus for the eye to be drawn to. Its outline and hint of reflection are strong enough to be the dominant feature in a picture of muted colour and overall simplicity.

2 Focal point placed on rule of thirds line

Careful positioning has ensured the castle's placement draws the eye perfectly. The rule of thirds line is a strong compositional tool and it has been used here alongside the shaped cloud to be the key focal point.

3 Vertical format

The composition has added drama from the use of a vertical format. This adds tension to the horizontal of the horizon line, as well as emphasising the emptiness of the foreground. The lack of obvious foreground naturally draws the eye up the image.

4 Suggested foreground

Here we have no obvious foreground rocks, beach textures or any dominant feature for the eye to lock onto. We are fooling the brain into 'filling in' the foreground with a suggestion of foreground with the swirling water.

5 Movement in natural elements

The long exposure has allowed the water to create a swirling pattern in the low tide. This gives the image a subtle foreground that helps draw the eye to the top of the picture.

The horizon across the middle of the frame creates a symmetrical composition

Symmetry rules

A typical symmetrical composition is based around the centre of the image. The essence of the composition is that the bottom half mirrors the top. Obviously, the larger and more detailed the reflection, the better. With this in mind, the horizon is placed directly across the middle of the frame. This is another composition rule broken, but to good effect. Without a foreground and when the rule of thirds is ignored, the eye is drawn to the centre of the frame. The result is striking and another way of composing an image without a foreground. Use water and a perfect reflection for strong images with empty foregrounds.

Midground is the new foreground

A typical foreground composition is made up of three main elements; foreground, midground and background that provide the start, middle and end of the viewer's journey through the picture. The foreground feature is often used to help create a sense of depth, but midground elements can prove effective enough to replace a foreground feature.

With a strong midground, a picture doesn't always need a complementary foreground feature to balance the image. The build up of the three elements can vary in size within the frame to create an image of balance and harmony.

Confidence is key

Composing images with no foreground requires confidence – in both the scene and the composition. The final image needs to stand up to scrutiny, and such a break away from tradition can result in a contemporary feel. Visually simple and stark images can be as effective and as powerful as a multi-layered composition, and will often be more striking through their relative starkness. It is bold and refreshing to remove all distracting elements to create an image with minimal form and structure. It can grab the attention of the viewer, but your own confidence in creating it is key.

Telephoto views

Telephoto views work by compressing the scene and often exclude foreground, yet are still effective. By using a telephoto lens you draw the distant view in, as if on the end of a rope, at the expense of any foreground in front of you. You create an image in the distance, incorporating many elements within the scene, to build up the picture. The lens compresses the scene and creates a foreshortening effect, making all the elements seem closer to one another than they actually are. Foreground is removed by default and yet the image loses no drama. In fact, it is often increased by the new elements you now bring into view.

A telephoto lens compresses the scene and draws in the disant view

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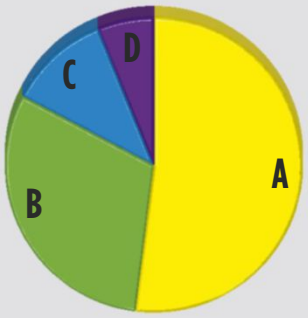


In AP 5 December we asked

Have you ever set yourself a photographic project?

You answered

1 Yes, I have set myself certain tasks or goals	**52%**
2 No, I just take photos that I want at a given time	**31%**
3 Yes, I consider most things I do part of an ongoing project	**11%**
4 I have never really considered it	**6%**

What you said

'Most of the work I do either grows out of a project or grows into a project'

'My current project is to compile a body of work which is currently rather vaguely titled, "Residual British Influences in Former Colonies"'

'Last winter I set myself the target of 50 acceptances in international salons. Surpassed that – but got no joy out of it. The "learning experience" was more negative (what not to enter) than a positive one. I also completed two years of emulation projects. Modern and iconic photographers' work. The learning experience was priceless'

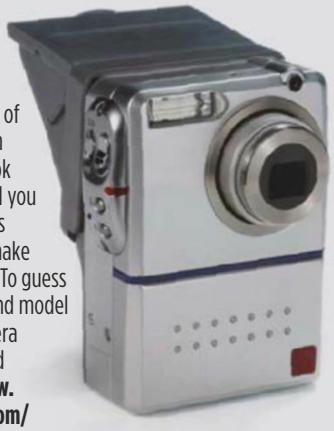
'Yes, I have set myself certain tasks or goals. One of them is the before and after pictures of the Bullring shopping centre in Birmingham'

This week we ask

If your camera manufacturer stopped making cameras, what would you do?

Vote online www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Guess the camera



Every other week we post a photograph of a camera on our Facebook page and all you have to do is guess the make and model. To guess the make and model of this camera (right), head over to **www.facebook.com/Amateur.photographer.magazine**. Forum members can also enter via the forum.

The cover published in AP 5 December is from 24 April 1974. The winner is Jeffrey Maye from Hampshire, whose guess was closest to the correct date.

Inbox

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Fond memories

Reading Ron Fletcher's letter (AP, 28 November 2015) brought back fond memories of ADOX KB14 film. In the early 1960s my parents gave me a Pentax S1a for my 21st birthday present, at the cost of £72 19s 6d [£72.97] purchased in Tottenham Court Road, London. I still have it, but have not used it for about ten years.

In those days I fired off about three rolls of 36-exposure film a week. Even in those times it was not a cheap hobby, especially for a lad still doing an apprenticeship. I used ADOX KB14 extensively for two reasons – it had a very fine grain and, most importantly, if my memory serves me right, I could buy it for a considerable saving in 20-metre lengths. This was loaded onto old cassettes in the cupboard under the stairs.

I had a number of failures to start with, but with practice I soon got the knack of loading film in the dark. This was then processed in an old Paterson plastic developing tank, again loaded in the cupboard under the stairs, reusing developer stored in brown glass bottles. The resulting film was printed using an old enlarger purchased at a jumble sale, minus a lens. Luckily, the lens thread in this old enlarger was the same as the 50mm lens kit lens on the Pentax camera, and this did a great job using the focusing ring on the lens to obtain a clear print rather than rack system on the enlarger column. I still have some of those old prints and the quality is superb – those old Japanese lenses were excellent.

Gerald Peppiatt, Essex

It was interesting to read about someone using a camera lens as an enlarger lens, as I'm playing around at the moment with the exact opposite. I'm using an E39-thread enlarger lens and a helicoid adapter, to allow me to focus, on a compact system camera. The square aperture blades of the cheap enlarger lens produce some very odd results, but the images are incredibly sharp – Richard Sibley, deputy editor

Win!

With ultra-fast performance, the new Samsung 16GB EVO SD card, Class 10, Grade 1, offers up to 48MB/sec transfer speed and has a ten-year warranty.
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Winners' work

Most of the photographs winning photographer of the year competitions these days seem to be montage shots. They normally feature backgrounds changed by adding layers using Photoshop or some other kind of post-processing tool.

In my opinion, montage pictures should be in a separate category. Good photography requires hard work – like camping out on a mountain to capture the best light as the sun rises. Similarly, good nature photography requires knowledge of the subject, as well as a study of its habitat and habits.

I know good landscape photographers focus at different points within the landscape and then blend images, so the final image has the maximum amount of the subject in focus, and they may also lighten and darken areas of the photograph to add effect. Indoor photography often requires bracketing and then using HDR software to get best results, as flash can kill indoor photos.

Often to get the best nature shots you have to be prepared to travel to remote locations at the right time of the year. This can cost a lot unless you can get a group together for the trip.

Nature photography also requires expensive prime telephoto lenses and additional stabilising equipment to allow you to track and keep focus on a bird until it comes in to land. I like street photography that captures a moment in time.

I believe photography competitions should not be about how good you are at changing images with Photoshop, but how you frame an image and your understanding of how your camera setting can alter the results.

Adrian Bonnington, Northamptonshire

I agree to some extent, Adrian, but a good photo is a good photo regardless of any processing adjustment. Digital imaging has been vilified by some as it has made it easier for an enthusiast to make such

© CHRIS POOLE

Chris Poole's photo was featured in AP 31 October

changes. There is something about digital editing that is seen as cheating, and if you're removing or adding elements to an original scene, then perhaps it is.

However, photographers still have to be in the right place at the right time. They still have to make the effort to study their location. With digital we don't expose the image to get a great shot out of the camera, we expose it to get the best raw image possible for post-processing.

In my eyes, altering the colour and contrast is acceptable – after all, a JPEG image has all these adjustments made in-camera. The manufacturer's engineers have already decided how your image should look. Perhaps there should be an 'in-camera photographer of the year competition'? – Richard Sibley, deputy editor

Tip top

Damien Demolder offered a short critique of one of my photographs in his *Appraisal* column in AP 31 October.

I found his point on exposure time a helpful comment and one to keep in mind. I agree with his point on contrast – having reviewed my original TIFF on-screen, it does look much more like Damien's improved version. It could be that the image lost something in conversion to JPEG or that I modified the JPEG poorly.

I was actually experimenting with a Cokin infrared filter on the camera. There's no flare in the conventional sense (as is obvious from the image, the sun was behind me), but there is a rather odd phenomenon that is, I think, a reflection off the filter back into the lens.

I suspect I hadn't placed the filter in the slot nearest to the lens, and I later found the technique worked better with a black cloth covering the remaining small gap between filter and lens – although it did look a bit like the days when a photographer operated with his head under a black cloth! Nonetheless, I'm grateful for the comments.

Chris Poole, Gloucestershire

I've found the same thing when photographing infrared images. You can get all sorts of strange flare and reflections, depending on the angle of the sun and how the light enters. It seems like a wonderfully bizarre idea to use a dark cloth under which we hide to view our LCD screens and reduce reflections. Maybe we should all do it? – Richard Sibley, deputy editor

In next week's issue On sale Tuesday 5 January

Nikkor 24-70mm f/2.8E ED VR

We find out whether Nikon's latest pro-spec standard zoom, the AF-S Nikkor 24-70mm f/2.8E ED VR, lives up to expections

Printing services

It's time to rescue your best photos from your hard drive, as Amy Davies puts four photo labs to the test

Perfect your portraits

Three successful portrait professionals share their knowledge and pass on tips to help you stand out and succeed

Putting on a show

Is one of your New Year's resolutions to exhibit your work? Roger Hicks offers his advice

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Printed in the UK by Polestar Group
Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, London E14.
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Attendees were able to try out some of the latest Nikon kit

Rich had the audience spellbound at Nikon School Live

The Nikon Df was among the cameras on hand at the AP event

© RICHARD PETERS

Light is the key

Richard Peters shares his advice about wildlife photography with a packed Nikon School Live audience

About Nikon School

NIKON SCHOOL offers workshops that cater for photographers of every level of ability, from complete beginners to practising professionals.

The Centre of Excellence, situated in Central London, offers a wide range of courses that are suited to individuals wanting to learn more about photography, or those who simply want to expand their creative horizons.

The Nikon School workshops are a mix of easy-to-understand theory and hands-on practical assignments that are held in small groups to ensure everyone can benefit from the expert knowledge of the tutors. From understanding your digital SLR and lenses, image editing, HDR montages and location fashion shoots to capturing candid street portraits, making HD video films and taking inspiring landscape images or wildlife shots, Nikon School workshops cover a variety of skills and subjects that ensure there is something for everyone.

'I didn't believe it at first when I first got the news. In fact, I had to email them back just to make sure it wasn't a wind-up!'

That's the first thought that struck wildlife photographer Richard Peters when he heard he'd won the Urban category of this year's Wildlife Photographer of the Year for his shot of a patrolling vixen titled 'Shadow Walker', which has also garnered him GDT European Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2015.

Despite such a busy year, we've managed to get him into the theatre at AP's HQ in London for the latest Nikon School Live seminar where he'll be discussing his work and photographic approach to around 90 lucky AP readers.

A long time Nikon user, Richard's main camera now is a D810, thanks to the lovely large files it delivers and the benefit of a couple of very quiet shutter release modes, which means his beloved D4 is now his back-up camera, only coming out when ultimate speed is required. As you'd expect from a wildlife photographer, he has a host of exotic long lenses, but one of his favourite lenses is the compact AF-S 18-35mm f/3.5-4.5G ED. 'It may not be as glamorous as some lenses,' Richard admits, 'but its small size, versatile range and decent image quality are perfect for me.'

Richard's talk really captures the imagination of the audience, that not only showcases a stunning selection of his images, but also offers a host of expert advice and insight that attendees can transfer to their own photography. With the seminar over, the audience then gets a chance to enjoy a glass of wine with views over London, chat with Richard some more and play with the latest Nikon gear, including the latest AF-S 24-70mm f/2.8E ED VR and AF-S 200-500mm f/5.6E ED VR.

More Nikon School Live seminars will be held in the coming months, so look out for announcements in AP.

The quality of light is vitally important to the success of an image

FORTHCOMING NIKON SCHOOL COURSES THAT MAY INTEREST YOU

Getting Started with Wildlife Photography

With exclusive access to the British Wildlife Centre, this is a great opportunity to get really close to our native wildlife, and in some instances, you will be able to enter the animals' enclosures while under supervision of the keeper. Also on hand is a Nikon trainer to demonstrate techniques and camera settings, as well as having some of the latest Nikon kit for you to try out on the day.

Join the Pros: Landscapes in Skye

Join Nikon's Neil Freeman and leading landscape and award winning professional Nikon Ambassador Jeremy Walker on this workshop to capture the dramatic, rugged landscapes of the Isle of Skye. From the towering brooding mass of the Cuillin Hills to the rock stacks of The Old Man of Storr and the wonderfully positioned Neist Point Lighthouse, the Isle of Skye has some of the UK's most iconic landscape locations.

The art of film noir portraits

On this Nikon School Masterclass you will learn how to capture classic Film Noir images and re-create the timeless Hollywood lighting look. Film Noir lighting can be challenging, but also brings many creative opportunities. We will run through everything from camera settings, lighting placement, composition to working with multiple light sources to create depth and drama to your images.

For more information on these and a wide range of other courses, please visit: www.nikon.co.uk/training

Rich's top tips

Manual metering

The ultimate way to achieve your desired results is to tell the metering system what you want to do. This is where manual exposure and exposure compensation become essential, as they will let you get the exposure just how you want. The important thing to remember is that most creative uses of light require an exposure that is the average meter reading of the entire scene, so don't be alarmed when your camera is telling you to brighten or darken the exposure.

Backlighting

This technique can produce a wonderful golden glow to the overall scene. It is most easily achieved at sunrise or sunset by ensuring the sun is just out of frame, so that its light is filtering across the image. The correct exposure – one that is not over or underexposed – should result in beautiful golden tones. However, it's important to remember that while you do not want the sun in the frame, the further away from the edge of frame the sun is, the less intense the warm tones. This effect can be further enhanced if it's a misty morning or the subject has visible breath, which will provide more atmosphere and an extra element of interest.

Sidelighting

Don't forget sidelight as it can be a really nice way to show off texture and contours in a really dramatic way. With the light only falling on some areas of the subject, you can get some truly beautiful contrasts between light, bright detail, and areas of darkness and shadow.

Kingfisher **Linfeng Chen** China

This extraordinary image from China has been captured with absolute precise timing. Linfeng Chen has caught the image at the exact moment the kingfisher captured its meal. The burst of colour on the bird's chest is a perfect contrast to the colourless bubbles that frame the body and wings. While we see many images of kingfishers, this one certainly stands out for its timing and technical proficiency.

High society

We take a look at some of the best images from the **158th Royal Photographic Society** print exhibition, including the three overall winners

© ADRIAN BROWN

Apartments **Adrian Brown** UK

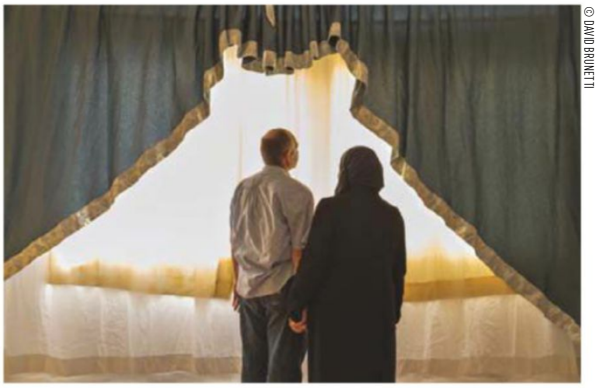
It used to be that architectural photography was simply a straight reproduction of a building within its environment. These days, pictures of buildings can be colourful and vibrant images, bordering on fine art. This image is a strong case in point. Adrian's photo makes great use of the building's lines and colours to create a vibrant image.

© LINFENG CHEN

© TADAO CERN

Hajar and Ibrahim
David Brunetti UK

This documentary image is taken from a moving series of images called 'Shattered Pieces of a Homeland'. 'I met Hajar and Ibrahim in Zarqa, Jordan, while on assignment for UNFPA,' says David. 'The couple and three of their children left Homs almost three years ago but their oldest daughter and her young family are still in Damascus. When Hajar talks about her daughter her eyes tear up.'



© DAVID BRUNETTI

Comfort Zone #2 Tadao Cern
Lithuania

This single image is from a series called 'Comfort Zone' that shows people relaxing on the beach. None of the images is staged and none of the people knew they were being photographed. Every one of the people featured has their face obscured in some way. It was, according to Tadao, a stressful project but it paid off – this image took the Bronze Award.

Overlooking Iraq from Iran
Yanan Li China

'I was in Khuzestan, Iran, in October 2014, when I came across a group of Iranian student girls who were on a visit to the border between Iran and Iraq,' says Yanan Li of this surprisingly playful and upbeat photograph. 'Some of them had climbed onto the tanks that had been left behind after the war and were taking photographs of each other.'

© YANAN LI

© HOWARD ASHTON-JONES

Splash Howard Ashton-Jones UK

'This image is part of an ongoing study of the shapes created by liquid drops and their collisions,' says Howard of this beautiful and technical image. 'I experiment with the consistency of liquids, colour dyes and liquid temperature, along with coloured lighting and photograph using drop/sensor timing triggers.'

© FRANK MACHALOWSKI

Tierwald #70 Frank Machalowski Germany

'I was photographing deer in a forest in Germany when I had the idea of simulating the image with a more exotic species, and this led to a series of images,' says Frank of this Silver Award image. 'The forest in this picture is the famous *Teutoburger Wald* and the rhino was photographed in Berlin Zoo.'

© MATT SMITH

Helping Hands Clive Downes ARPS UK

Here we find a dramatic black & white shot of the Tough Mudder event. This gruelling obstacle course is a team-oriented event over 10-12 miles (18-20km) designed to test physical strength and mental grit. The mud and dirt mean the colour would be washed away, so Clive wisely converted to monochrome.

© CLIVE DOWNES

Nelson's Head, Shoreditch, June 2014 Jan Klos Poland

'This image is from a series of group portraits of the teams of staff at some of east London's much-loved public houses,' says Jan, who won the Gold Award with this shot. 'Inspired by the traditional family portrait, I wanted to show the staff as just that: a family. Sadly, shortly after this group portrait was taken, the Nelson's Head closed down.'

© JAN KLOS

Smile Luoliya Zhou China

Shooting from the same eye level as the child has brought us into their world. We can feel the rain on our face and the cold on our skin. The title of the image could be ironic (how could anyone smile in such harsh conditions?) but a closer inspection reveals that there could well be the beginnings of a gentle smile on the child's face.

Your Move Matty Smith Australia

'I slowly and cautiously approached, maintaining strong eye contact and light fin movements to avoid stirring up the silt,' says underwater photographer Matty Smith. 'The crocodile remained motionless with just its yellow, periscope-like eye staring straight back at me – it felt like a stand-off.'

© LUOLIYA ZHOU

© LISE ULRICH

Queen of the Deep Blue Sea
Lise Ulrich UK

'As the world's most dangerous predator, the polar bear is not often associated with great elegance,' says Lise. 'Underwater, however, this female bear, Noël, pirouettes gracefully to the surface after having caught a fish between her teeth with an almost serene look on her face. There is much beauty to this magnificent beast, but securing a future for Noël and her kin is in the hands of mankind.'

Heavy Cross
Tianli Lin China

This is an incredible image of one of China's numerous 'car graveyards'. Hundreds of thousands of cars are piled high. Here in the UK we scrap around 1.5 million cars, which stands in stark contrast to the 5.5 million cars that were scrapped in China in 2015. However, it's estimated that around 16 million will be ready for the pile in 2020. It's a frightening portrait of a world that is predisposed to waste that disposes of objects and vehicles at a staggering rate.

© TIANLI LIN

Look Away
Gillian Hyland UK

Gillian Hyland is a photographer known for her intricately designed images, many of which have been used in several recognisable advertisements throughout the world. Her background is actually in fashion photography and here we see how she has combined that approach with a haunting Gregory Crewdson-like aesthetic. Everything from the outfits to the smoke and light have been perfectly realised.

© GILLIAN HYLAND

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Bitten by the bug

Discover a hidden world, as **Mikael Buck** shows you how to shoot incredible close-ups

Mikael Buck
Mikael is a London-based editorial and commercial photographer. Having spent more than a decade working as a photojournalist for titles such as *The Times*, *Mail on Sunday* and the *Metro*, Mikael now works on commission for UK national newspapers, high-profile corporations and the country's biggest brands. **www.mikaelbuck.com**

One of the most fascinating aspects of photography is that it can open the door to worlds we can't see with the naked eye. Capturing this hidden world has its share of challenges and requires a far more systematic approach than other areas of photography, but the results are fascinating and rewarding. Capturing macro images of the most populous but least-seen creatures on our planet – insects – is a great example of this.

For best results, you'll need to use a technique known as stacking – shooting multiple images of the same thing at slightly different points of focus before blending them together to create a highly detailed final image.

The set-up

What's important to keep in mind is that your composition and exposure for every image in the series need to be consistent, so when you come to post-production the software will seamlessly create the final image. To achieve this, you need to make sure you take care to set things up properly.

You'll need a spacious work area, where no one will disturb your equipment, and you'll need space to move around without accidentally hitting anything. At the very least, you'll want a heavy tripod and a sturdy table that won't move. I highly recommend using a geared tripod head that allows you to make small and accurate adjustments to the camera position, as this will save you time when it comes to composition. Tape everything down: I stress-test my kit set-up before I begin, so if I do knock something I know everything will stay in place. To achieve the incredible close focusing, you'll want to use a series of extension tubes to sit between your lens and camera. These can be picked up reasonably cheaply, while a simple 50mm prime is a good starting point as your lens.

Composition

Good composition can be the difference between the image being just a scientific record, and something wholly more engaging and more aesthetically pleasing.

For insects, use low angles looking up at the subject as it will appear more dynamic. Think about how the frame will be read. The eyes and mouths of insects are fantastic focal points, but claws, mandibles and hair can all be used as powerful reference points.

When setting up the shot, leave as much space as possible around the subject. Be aware that you'll need to use quite a heavy crop on the images because the extension tubes will protrude into your frame.

You'll find that stitching may adjust your crop as well, so the more room you leave yourself, the more flexibility you'll have to create a pleasing final composition. This is where a camera with a large megapixel count, like my 42.4-million-pixel Sony Alpha 7R II, comes in handy.

This kind of photography can easily be done on a table at home

ALL PICTURES © MIKAEL BUCK/SONY

KIT LIST

▲Sony Alpha 7R II

As stacking requires heavy cropping, a high megapixel count camera will allow you plenty of flexibility to do this and still retain large printable files. The full-frame Alpha 7R II camera can take incredibly sharp and detailed pictures with the right lenses.

▲Micro-adjustment plate

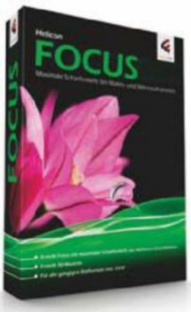
It's almost impossible to make adjustments this tiny using just your lens. The adjustment plate lets you move your camera back and forth in small increments, giving you a much better selection for your stack.

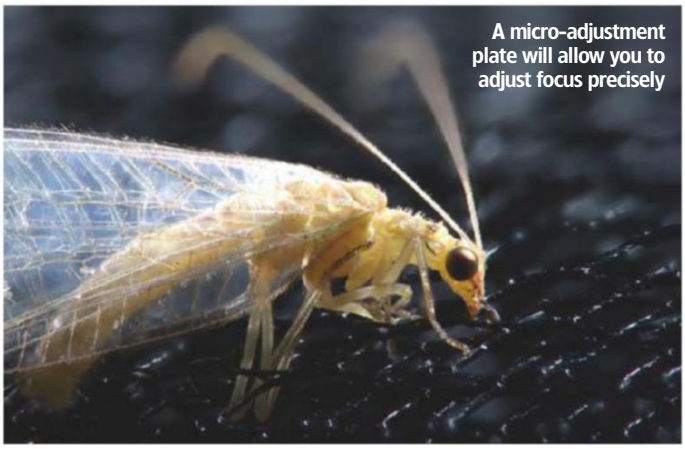
▶Flashguns

Using flashguns will allow you to use a small aperture and low ISO. A low ISO will give you less noise and more room to adjust colours and exposure in post, and you need to keep lighting consistent across all the images for your stitching, which may not be possible with ambient light.

▶Helicon Focus Pro

While stitching can be done in other software, I highly recommend using this program as it allows you to generate a raw file from the final stack, giving you more flexibility when editing.





A micro-adjustment plate will allow you to adjust focus precisely

Technique

Consistency is key. The aim of stacking is to create a series of identical images, where you move the focus in tiny increments across the image to give you enough material to stitch together in the computer to achieve enough depth of field in your image. Do this by moving the camera a tiny amount either towards or away from the subject using a micro-adjustment plate. Manually adjusting focus in small enough increments using the focus barrel on the lens is almost impossible.

Set up the camera as close as possible to the subject so you can withdraw from it, rather than approach. In this way you don't have to worry about accidentally bumping into equipment, disturbing the insect and ruining the shot. Use a cable release or the timer setting on your camera to ensure there's no movement of the camera itself. Take as many images as you can, while moving as little as possible with your adjustment plate. You might not use all images for your stack, but you want to have as many options as possible. Set your exposure manually, otherwise you risk variation between frames.

To get the depth of field you need it's important to use flash, as there won't be enough ambient light to shoot at a smaller aperture. Fortunately, as insects are tiny, ordinary flashguns are just right. Position lights as close to the subject as possible, using a Gorillapod or miniature tripod, and experiment. Give your lights enough time to refresh between each frame. If the lighting is inconsistent, the stitching process won't work. Keep it simple to begin with and once you are comfortable with the technique you can move on to a bit of experimentation. As with your camera settings, make sure your flash power setting is done manually.

For initial attempts, take 20-30 images at f/11 and ensure you move focus through the frame. You can then start using wider apertures and get sharper images, taking more frames as the depth of field gets smaller. Ultimately, you want to aim to use your lens's sweet spot of around f/4-f/5.6. This could require you take as many as 100 shots to get an image sharp across the frame.

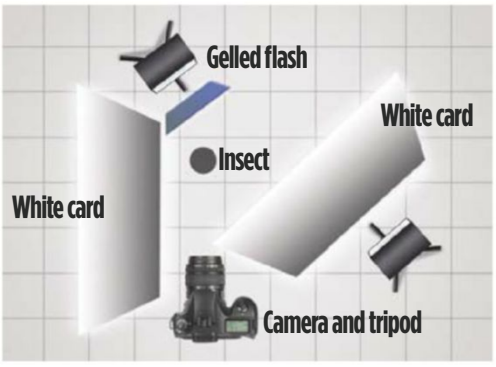
Editing

I recommend using specialised stacking software so you can focus on your images and experiment as much as possible. Helicon Focus lets you export a raw file of the finished stack. Learning the stacking software can be demanding, so don't be discouraged if your initial results aren't as great as you'd hoped. The radius and smoothing settings required for a particular image can vary greatly, and the best setting can often only be found through experimentation. Over time, though, you'll develop a knack for it. AP

To blend multiple images together, try Helicon Focus Pro software

The lighting set-up

The set-up for this shot of a ladybird was quite straightforward, with the choice of background used being key. The strong colour and fibres from the scarf work really well against the subject. Two remotely triggered flashguns were used – one gelled and the other firing through white card to soften the key light. Finally, a sheet of white card was positioned to the left of the camera to reflect light back into the shadows.



Top Tips

Experiment with background

As you get more familiar with the stacking technique, you can try using coloured gels or card to really bring your images to life with interesting light and background.

Use a dedicated stacking program

A specialised program like Helicon Focus lets you stitch together raw files, so you have plenty of flexibility when it comes to post-processing. Experiment with your stitches using JPEGs before applying it to raw files.

Freeze your bugs

Insects degrade incredibly quickly after death, so it's best to capture them while they're still alive – but they can't be allowed to move. The best way to shoot them is to lower their body temperature so they begin to hibernate and their movement slows. The time you want them in the fridge/freezer is based on their size and heft. Place them in a Tupperware container and then check on them every 1-5 minutes to see if they've cooled enough for their movement to slow down.

Why it works

When you are creating imagery using stacking, it can sometimes be very tempting to forget about aesthetics, and just tie up 500 images to achieve perfect sharpness.

While this method can be impressive, it's often not the best way to create really arresting shots. Ultimately, you shouldn't forget that it's the capturing of a story in images that works really well. In this shot of the common house spider (right), I chose to keep the focus heavily on the eyes and fans to really bring out the spider's dynamism and vitality – this shot was a stack of just two frames.

Your eye needs a way through the frame. Think about how you would shoot a person, a larger animal or a car, and then apply the same process to your macro photography.

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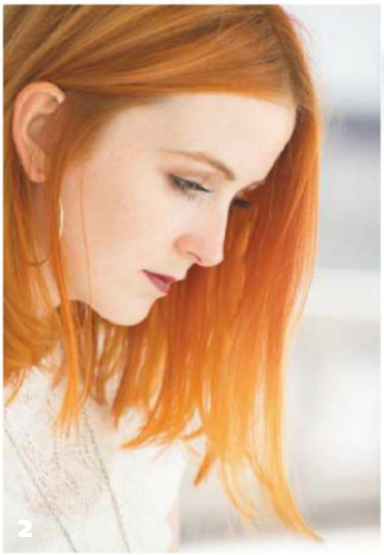

Sue Phelps, Berkshire

Sue was first given a camera when she was just five years old and has loved photography ever since. However, she only started to take it seriously when she received her first DSLR five years ago. Sue is particularly taken with the genres of macro and portraiture. In fact, portraiture is a relatively new passion and she loves capturing the essence of a person in a single picture. As Sue says, a successful portrait is all in the eyes.

Fiona

2 By shooting her model in this manner, Sue has been able to use high-key lighting to highlight and emphasise the model's strikingly coloured hair

Nikon D600, 70-300mm, 1/250sec at f/5, ISO 800

Rachel

3 This shot allowed Sue to experiment with close-up portraiture. The focus here was on mood and strong eye contact between subject and viewer

Nikon D600, 85mm, 1/200sec at f/4, ISO 320

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Hippy Chic

Sue's thinking here was to create a portrait with a 1960s or '70s feel. It was also a good lesson in how to take a colour image that she knew would be converted into black & white
Nikon D600, 70-300mm, 1/4000sec at f/2, ISO 160

Vintaged Red

4 In this image we see Sue showcasing how a simple pose of the hands, as well as careful framing, can add a fresh dimension to an image
Nikon D600, 70-300mm, 1/250sec at f/5.6, ISO 1,800

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Badgers

By Robert Canis

Robert Canis discusses his lengthy commitment to photographing a badger sett, and the techniques that helped him achieve his goal

Robert took this image on a warm, humid evening in early summer
Nikon D600, 70-200mm at 110mm, 1/60sec at f/2.8, ISO 1,600, tripod, cable release, mirror lock-up

© ROBERT CANIS

I have been observing badgers at this sett for more than 25 years. As a boy, I would cycle the mile or so to the edge of this field, a tripod (sometimes two, with one to hold the flash) attached to the side of the cycle frame with bungee cords, and a pack on my back.

Once my bike was padlocked to the fence, I would skirt the edge of two fields until I was around 200m from where I would be positioned for the evening. At that point I would stop, put on my camouflage jacket, hat and gloves, and set up my camera on the tripod to minimise disturbance when in the woodland. I still adopt the same way of working, the only difference being that I now drive rather than cycle.

Prior to this image being made, I had spent the previous weeks photographing all manner of badger behaviour, including grooming and collecting bedding. For the most part, I was going in quite tight using the 200mm end of a 70-200mm f/2.8 lens on my Nikon D600. But on one occasion, when I sat a few metres further back than usual, I noticed that the surrounding elder trees framed the branch they would often walk over.

This path over the branch is positioned just 10 metres from the edge of the wood. Being west-facing, it receives good light from early spring through to midsummer, at which point the foliage closes in and makes it very difficult to observe, let alone take any pictures. Given that by this point it was early summer, I didn't have long before it would become almost impossible to produce the image I wanted.

Most evenings the badgers would appear at around 7.30pm, so I would arrive and be settled at least one hour before then. Once in position, I would compose the scene using the same lens at 110mm and set the ISO to 800 with the D600 on aperture priority. The ISO would then be increased, manually, in line with the failing light.

There were a number of factors I needed to take into account and the first was critical focus. Given that I was using the lens's widest aperture of f/2.8 (this would give me the fastest possible shutter speed to prevent subject blur and produce a soft vignette), depth of field was extremely shallow, and it was imperative to get the badgers pin-sharp.

Using the camera's autofocus was out of the question, as this would use up valuable time and there was the risk that it wouldn't lock on exactly where I wanted it to. During set-up, I therefore activated live view, zoomed in to the fallen branch and manually focused on the marks the badgers had made on the bark by their claws. I then took a test image to ascertain exposure, which showed me that the daylight between the background trees had fooled the meter into underexposure, so I would dial in +0.7 exposure compensation.

The first few evenings were unsuccessful, with the badgers either walking straight over at pace or appearing too late. The sightings, however, were still special. Badgers would approach within metres and cubs would be playing, watched by their ever-present mother.

On the evening I took this image, it was warm and humid, and as the sun cast long shadows through this old coppice woodland the mosquitoes tormented me, forcing me to cover every inch of my skin. As the sun set and the birdsong quietened, I readied myself, ever hopeful. Soon after 9pm I heard rustling and could just make out two badgers on the opposite side of the branch. Suddenly, without warning, they both stood on the branch, with one leaning (as if at a bar!), and surveyed the area long enough for me to activate mirror lock-up, hold still for a couple of seconds and take the photograph.

They heard the noise of the shutter, but weren't able to make out what was making the

noise. This allowed me a second opportunity, which produced the image you see here. They then passed over the branch and began foraging beneath where I sat.

An hour after the badger activity stopped, I made my way out of the wood and onto the edge of the field, confident that they had moved further afield. In the gathering mist, I contentedly walked back along the same path I had used for more than a quarter of a century. AP

Robert Canis

Robert has been a professional nature photographer for more than 20 years. He gives around 20 illustrated talks each year and regularly holds wildlife and landscape photography workshops both in the UK and overseas. He is represented by three international agencies and has been the recipient of numerous awards. **www.robertcanis.com**

TOP TIPS

ANYONE who observes and photographs badgers will tell you that, first and foremost, you have to abide by a few simple rules if you are to be successful in photographing this endearing and enigmatic mammal. You should wear dark-coloured, silent clothing. Although badgers have very poor eyesight, they are able to detect anything that, to them, seems out of place, so it is imperative to position yourself where you are not silhouetted against the skyline. Although a full camo outfit isn't necessary for badger photography, I wear a Realtree camouflage jacket that never gets washed and which remains in the boot of my car. Clean, fresh-smelling clothing will do you no favours! I also wear a headnet and gloves to cover any skin. It also pays to arrive at least one hour before the badgers' estimated time of appearance and to position yourself downwind, since their sense of smell is approximately 800 times more acute than our own. The time badgers appear will vary depending on the location – to find out, you could place a trail-cam nearby a week or so prior to photography.

Evening Class

Photoshop guru **Martin Evening** sorts out your photo-editing and post-processing problems

Adding selective focus

THE STANDOUT feature in Georgina Larham's image is the accentuated perspective – the rails converge to a vanishing point – although I feel that it has been cropped too tightly. An 18-55mm zoom lens was used, but the photograph was shot at the 50mm setting. A shorter focal length would have emphasised the perspective and allowed for more on the right of the image. In the following steps, I show how Photoshop's Lens Blur filter can be used to apply selective focus. In this example, I created an alpha channel depth map, used to simulate the effect of a shallow depth of focus, to make it appear it had been shot using a prime lens at a wide aperture.

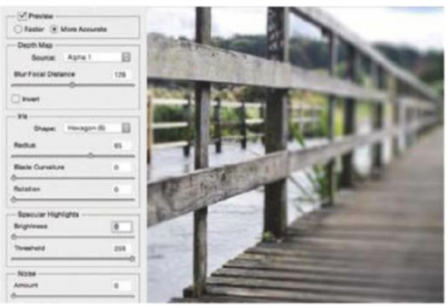
Submit your images
Please see the 'Send us your pictures' section on page 3 for details or visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

1 Basic panel adjustments

I began by opening the JPEG original from Bridge via Camera Raw. In the Basic panel I lightened the Exposure by +0.95 and added a little more contrast. In the Presence section I boosted the Clarity, setting it to +23 to add more texture to the wood grain.

2 Apply HSL adjustments

In this step I switched to the HSL/Grayscale panel and checked the Luminance tab. Next, I selected the Targeted Adjustment tool from the Tools panel in Camera Raw and used this to hover the cursor over areas of the image, dragging up to lighten and dragging down to darken.

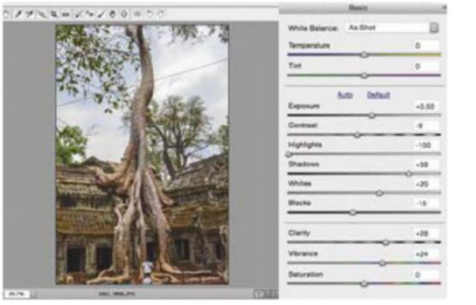


3 Add Lens Blur filter

In Photoshop, I added an alpha channel with a black to white linear gradient. Using Filter>Blur>Lens Blur I added lens blur and used the Blur Focal Distance slider to find the sharpest focus point using the alpha channel as the Depth Map source.

Removing unwanted elements

THE BIGGEST problem in this image from Angela Dimartino was how to remove the unwanted elements, such as the tourists. One of the ways to do this is to shoot a succession of images from the same point, align the images together and remove them using layer masks, or use a Photoshop Stack Mode. Here, I relied on the Spot Healing Brush in content-aware mode to retouch out certain elements.



1 Basic panel adjustments

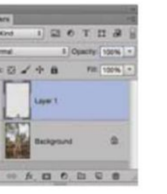
First, I opened the JPEG original via Camera Raw. An easy way to do this is via Bridge, by choosing File> Open in Camera Raw. Here, I went to the Basic panel first, where I lightened the Exposure setting and, at the same time, set the Highlights to -100 to preserve as much of the cloud detail as possible.

2 Darken the sky

I then switched to the HSL panel, where I dragged the colour sliders in the Luminance section to darken the blue and add more contrast to the sky. I darkened the green colours to prevent halo edges appearing around the edges of the tree leaves, and I also lightened the oranges and reds to lighten the tree trunk.

3 Remove cable

I opened the image in Photoshop and added a new layer. With the Spot Healing Brush selected and the Sample All Layers option checked, I used this tool to remove any distracting elements.



Spot Healing Brush tool

THE FINISHING touches I applied to Angela's photograph required me to open the image in Photoshop, where I used the Spot Healing Brush tool. I did this using the Content-Aware mode, which samples texture from the area surrounding the point you are healing to fill the destination area.

Here, I used the tool to remove the tourists and posts from the bottom of the picture. I also used this method to remove the overhead cable. I was able to click at one end of the cable and then, with the Shift key held down, click at the other end of the cable to remove large sections easily.

Martin Evening is a noted expert in both photography and digital imaging. He is well known in London for his fashion and beauty work, for which he has won several awards. Martin has worked with the Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Lightroom engineering teams over many years and is one of the founding members of a software design company. Visit **www.martinevening.com**

Accessories

Useful gadgets to enhance your photography, from phones to filters...

Ikigai Rival Backpack

● £229.99 ● uk.ikigaibags.com

Andy Westlake reviews a new concept in camera bags

At a glance

- Backpack with separate removable camera cell
- Laptop compartment
- Secure access through back
- Additional camera cells available separately

NEWCOMER Ikigai aims to take the humble camera bag and do something a bit different to the norm. Its idea is to produce a modular system that will allow padded camera cells to be interchanged between different types of outer bag. Its first products are two different sized backpacks, and we're looking at the smaller of them here.

In essence, you get a medium-sized backpack with a black nylon exterior, well-padded shoulder straps and a back that's designed to promote airflow and stop you getting sweaty. The contents are accessed by means of a zip that extends all around the back of the bag. Undoing it reveals a laptop compartment that will accommodate models with screens up to 15in, such as a MacBook Pro, backed with another slimline sleeve for a tablet. The camera cell is an entirely separate bag that clips inside; it has a zipped top cover, along with zipped flaps allowing access from the sides. It will hold a professional DSLR with a 70-200mm f/2.8 lens attached, along with another four lenses and other accessories.

Verdict

There's a lot to like about this bag – it seems sturdy and well made, and the quality of materials and finish is very good. Likewise, the camera cell is thickly padded and easily reconfigurable between top and side access, and the lime-green interior keeps contents visible. The main problem is that it's impossible to get at your kit on the go – there's no access except through two sets of zips at the back. Also, the dual-bag design means you can fit less in compared to conventional backpacks of a similar size. So while the concept is interesting, it needs further work to be really practical.

ALL PRICES ARE APPROXIMATE STREET PRICES

ABOUT IKIGAI

Ikigai takes its name from a Japanese word that translates as 'strength from within'. It's a new company, but it does have real pedigree. Its lead designer previously held the same position at Kata, before it was bought and absorbed by Manfrotto.

Ikigai's key concept is to produce a modular system, using interchangeable camera cells that clip in and out of various styles of bag. So, for example, you might switch from carrying a backpack to a messenger bag by simply moving a camera cell between them.

Alternatively, you might pick alternate camera cells with different sets of equipment, depending on the shoot. It's an intriguing idea and it will be interesting to see whether Ikigai can make it work.

Out now

Expert reviews of the latest kit to look out for

Manfrotto 804RC2 Mark II 3-way head

● £79 ● www.manfrotto.co.uk

MANFROTTO'S Mark II version of its 804RC2 three-way head is a small but welcome update to this highly regarded piece of kit. The only real change is to the control handles, with the two longer ones adopting the sliding collapsible design we previously saw on the more expensive XPRO three-way head, while the small pan lock is now shorter and stubbier. As a result, the new version is much easier to pack up for transport, without compromising its usability.

Otherwise, it's almost the same as its predecessor. At 750g it's not overly heavy, being made from tough Adapto polymer, and it's rated to support a 4kg load. The quick release uses Manfrotto's standard RC2 pattern, and a bubble level helps with keeping the camera straight and level.

I used an original 804RC2 in the studio for product shots, and found it to be a solid and reliable workhorse. It doesn't have the load capacity or friction control of its XPRO bigger brother, and slightly jerky movements can make fine adjustment of the camera position difficult, but it's good value for money and should last for years.

Andy Westlake

Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★½

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At a glance

- 20.2-million-pixel, 1in BSI CMOS sensor
- 24-100mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8 lens
- 2.36-million-dot OLED EVF, 120fps refresh
- 3in, 1.04-million-dot fully articulated touchscreen
- 5.9fps continuous shooting, 4.4 fps with AF
- £629.99

Canon PowerShot G5 X

With a wealth of physical controls, the **Canon PowerShot G5 X** is aimed squarely at the enthusiast photographer. **Callum McInerney-Riley** tests it out

For and against

- ➕ Large sensor compared to camera size
- ➕ Fast zoom lens
- ➕ Great colour rendition in JPEG
- ➕ Excellent electronic viewfinder
- ➖ Relatively slow autofocus
- ➖ Slow to write raw files
- ➖ Not truly a pocketable camera

Where in the range

Canon PowerShot G1 X Mark II

Price £470

The G1 X has a larger 1.5in, 12.8MP CMOS sensor and a 24-120mm equivalent f/2-f/3.9 lens, but no viewfinder

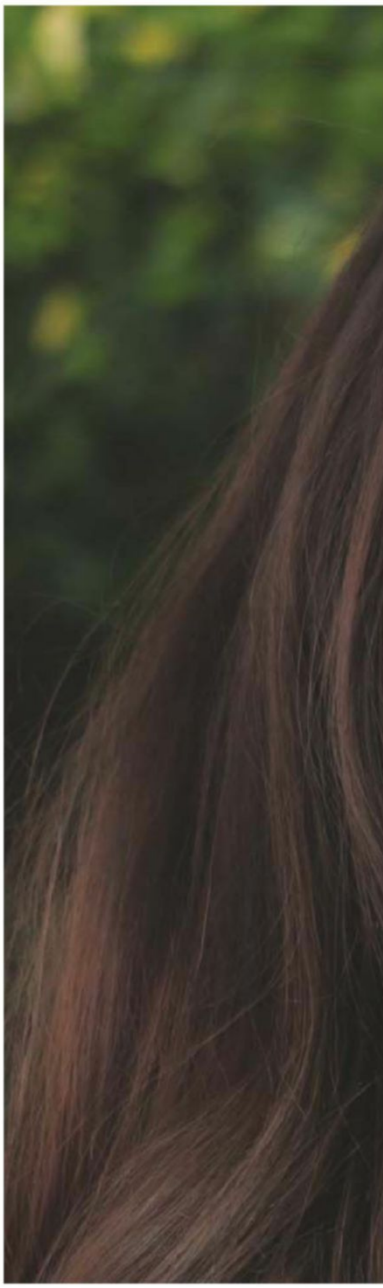
Canon PowerShot G7 X

Price £370

The G7 X uses the same 1in, 20.2MP sensor and 24-100mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8 lens as the G5 X, but lacks the EVF and the physical controls

Data file

Sensor	20.2-million-pixel, 1in BSI CMOS
Output size	5472x3548
Focal length mag	2.7x
Lens	24-100mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8
File format	JPEG, raw (CR2), JPEG+raw
Shutter speeds	30-1/2000 sec + bulb
ISO	125-12,800 + auto
Exposure modes	PASM, smart auto, scene
Metering	Evaluative, centre, spot
Drive	5.9 fps, 4.4fps with AF
Movie	Full HD, 60, 50, 30, 25, 24fps
Viewfinder	2.36-million-dot OLED EVF
Display	1.04-million dot 3in fully articulated touchscreen
Focusing	31-point contrast detection
Memory card	SD, SDHC, SDXC
Dimensions	112.4x76.4x44.2mm
Weight	377g (including battery and card)



Canon's recent launch of the PowerShot G9 X and G5 X was designed to bolster its current range of enthusiast compacts. The G5 X sits above last year's pocket-sized PowerShot G7 X, and it would appear that Canon has taken on board a lot of comments from consumers with regard to that camera. At first glance, the G5 X looks as if it's designed to offer everything the enthusiast photographer had hoped for from the G7 X but didn't quite get. While the G7 X's image quality and lens are good, it doesn't excel in terms of handling in the now rather crowded 1in-sensor compact market. As a result, the G5 X takes it up a notch with an excellent electronic viewfinder, a wealth of

This portrait was lit with a small softbox and a flash fired off-camera, thanks to the Canon hotshoe

wealth of customisable buttons and controls, and a more comfortable grip, all of which vastly improve its handling, albeit at the expense of its overall size.

Features

Inside the PowerShot G5 X is a 1in, back-illuminated sensor with a resolution of 20.2 million pixels. This is likely to be the same Sony-made sensor that we first saw inside the Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 II back in 2013, and which has featured inside several high-end compact cameras since. It's the same sensor as that used in Canon's PowerShot G3 X and the more recent G7 X and G9 X. It's a popular sensor for good reason – but more on that later.

Equally impressive is the 8.8-36.8mm f/1.8-f/2.8 lens, which is equivalent to 24-100mm in 35mm terms. This focal range adequately covers everything from landscapes to portraiture. The additional range at the long end, while maintaining its f/2.8 aperture, gives it the edge on its competitors. The Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 IV features a Carl Zeiss Vario-Sonnar T* 24-70mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8 lens, while the Panasonic Lumix DMC-LX100 has a Leica DC 24-75mm f/1.7-2.8. Housed inside the lens are nine rounded aperture blades, which should help afford a pleasing look to out-of-focus areas of pictures. A 5cm minimum-focusing distance means it's easy to shoot close-ups.

The lens also has intelligent 5-axis optical stabilisation, which Canon claims will allow handholding at up to 3 stops slower than normal. It's usual for manufacturers' claims to fall on the generous side, but I was able to shoot at 1/10sec in low light and still get a usable shot.

A 3-stop built-in ND filter is featured on the G5 X. This allows users to shoot with wider apertures in bright conditions or to slow down shutter speeds, which is good for portraits and capturing motion in images. The ND filter can either be set to on, off or automatic.

An extensive sensitivity of ISO 125-12,800 is offered. Like many of Canon's recent DSLR cameras, including the Canon EOS 750D, the PowerShot G5 X uses the DIGIC 6 processor. Also like the DSLRs, the G5 X can shoot both raw and JPEG formats. Canon states a 5.9fps continuous-shooting speed with focus fixed at the start of the burst, and 4.4fps with autofocus between frames. However, this is for JPEG shooting only, and when shooting raw the speed is much slower. I found when shooting raw + JPEG large, I could take approximately six shots in ten seconds. In raw only it's slightly faster, but still well over one second per raw image.

The G5 X just doesn't buffer and process the large 20.2-million-pixel raw files very well. Clearly, this camera isn't intended for wildlife and sports shooters, who need to rattle off frame after frame, but even so, I still feel its raw-shooting capability is

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With the flip-out LCD, it's possible to shoot street photography from the hip easily

slower than I would like.

The G5 X has Wi-Fi compatibility and can connect using dynamic NFC. This allows users to send photos and video to their smartphone and tablet quickly via the Canon Camera Connect app, which is available for both Android and iOS. From this app it's also possible to control the camera remotely from your smart device, and the Wi-Fi functionality allows wireless connectivity to a variety of Canon printers.

Above the viewfinder is a pop-up flash and a hotshoe. The pop-up flash is fairly powerful and I found it lit up a large group of ten people at a range of around 3m. The flash boasts a sync of 1/2,000sec and can be adjusted ±2 EV. With the hotshoe, users can attach a Canon-fit flashgun and use it with ETTL, just like any Canon DSLR.

Video can be captured at a maximum resolution of 1,080x1,920 at a frame rate of 60, 50, 30, 25 or 24fps. While lower resolutions are available, these are at frame rates of 25fps or 24fps. Thanks to the 5-axis stabilisation, I found the video I captured looked very smooth and was of reasonable quality.

The G5 X uses a rechargeable Lithium-ion NB-13L battery, which is rated up to 330 shots in eco mode and 210 shots using the LCD and EVF. I found for a day's shooting the battery lasted well, and the addition of micro USB charge capabilities is excellent. It means it's possible to quickly top up the battery from a power bank or from an Android phone charger. Canon has also included an external charger, which is quicker than using USB.

Build and handling

When Canon brought out the G5 X and the G9 X, they were designed to sit either side of the G7 X. The G9 X is a smaller and simpler version of the G7 X, while the G5 X is designed to be a bigger camera with more manual controls. Overall, the G5 X has a feel that would suit the discerning enthusiast photographer, being more akin to a DSLR than it is to a point-and-shoot compact.

On the front is a large rubberised hand grip, which is curved and tapers off towards the lens. At the rear of the camera is a large thumb grip that is moulded inward towards the exposure-compensation dial. These make the camera comfortable to hold, carry and shoot with.

'The G5 X has a feel that would suit the discerning enthusiast photographer'

Overall, the G5 X trumps both the G7 X and its main competitor, the Sony RX100 IV, for the best user experience. However, in the size department the G5 X is considerably larger than either, measuring 112.4x76.4x44.2mm and weighing 377g, so it can't be slipped into the pocket of a pair of jeans with ease. While I was using it, I carried it in my coat pocket. This is fine in winter, but when the jackets are back in the wardrobe in spring and summer, the camera will probably require a carry strap or a case to house it. For me, what the G5 X loses in portability it makes up for in usability, but the G7 X and G9 X may be better options for those who are put off by the G5 X's size.

At the front of the camera is an unusual-looking dial that is used to adjust core settings. Due to the shape of the camera, I found I didn't use my forefinger to operate it. Instead, I opted to use my middle finger while having my forefinger on the shutter, and index and little fingers gripping the camera. It sounds strange, but it is a comfortable set-up.

On the top of the camera is a large exposure-compensation dial, which is controllable from ±3EV in ⅓-stop increments. It's a fantastic asset to the camera.

Around the lens is another control ring, which, by default, allows users to change aperture in manual mode. At the rear of the camera is a D-pad that doubles as a scroll wheel. Inside shooting menu 2 is a sub-menu called 'function assignment'. This allows users to activate and assign aperture, ISO, manual focus and shutter speed to the various dials. It's also possible to assign different functions in Av, Tv and Manual modes. In the same menu are numerous button assignments that allow photographers a wealth of customisation options to tailor the camera to their preference. I assigned the zoom to the lens control ring instead of using the lever around the shutter button.

For those users who like to rely on a touchscreen

ROUND THREE NOW OPEN!

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The competition is split into three rounds, each with its unique theme: Nature, Time and Love. To enter, submit a video no more than five minutes in length, of HD quality. You can shoot on any camera you'd like, and the content and editing are up to your imagination – so long as it fits the round's particular theme.

Visit www.thevideomode.com to view the top videos, as well as the scores and a leaderboard for the overall competition. The winner will be the person with the most points after three rounds, who will win the overall prize as well as title of Amateur Filmmaker of the Year.

Round Three: Love

We want to see how you convey your love for someone or something through film in a creative way for this round. Try using techniques such as 'lens whacking' or 'light leaks' to add that soft feel to your footage. For examples, go to www.thevideomode.com/examples.

Rounds and dates

Below is a list of the competition rounds, their themes and the dates you need to know. To view the results, visit www.thevideomode.com. When planning your entry, take into consideration the criteria of fulfilling the brief, creativity and technical excellence on which you'll be judged.

Theme	Opens	Closes
Round One: Nature	1 Aug	30 Sep
Round Two: Time	1 Oct	31 Dec
Round Three: Love	1 Jan	28 Feb

The overall winner will be announced in April 2016

Prizes

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Round One

Canon EOS 7D Mark II, worth £1,499.99
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Round Two

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Canon Legria Mini X, worth £329.99

Round Three

Canon XC10 (with 128GB CFast card and reader), worth £1,999.99
Canon Legria Mini X, worth £329.99

Overall prize

Canon Cinema EOS C100 Mark II, worth £3,599.99

Visit www.thevideomode.com/afoy3 to send us a link to your short film and to view the full terms and conditions

THE VIDEO MODE

In association with Canon

Being small and light the G5 X made for a great companion to take fishing

interface for changing control, this camera has that option. However, with the huge number of buttons I found myself relying on the touchscreen relatively little. I used it mainly to operate the quick menu and set the autofocus point, but these can just as easily be done using buttons on the camera's back in concert with the D-pad. In general, it's not a go-to method for changing settings.

Overall, the buttons aren't too fiddly and are well placed around the body, which isn't always the case with compact cameras.

The touchscreen and quick menu resemble that of Canon's other compact cameras, while the main menus are all colour coded and well laid out much as they are on Canon's DSLRs. Anybody coming from an EOS DSLR will feel right at home using this camera, and I think Canon menus are among the easiest to use. Nothing is too cluttered and they're easy to navigate, making customising and tweaking the camera simple.

It's also worth noting that there's the option to create your own My Menu to collate all your most frequently changed options into a single menu.

LCD and viewfinder

One of the biggest areas in which the G5 X distinguishes itself from the competition is in the LCD and viewfinder combination. The 2.36-million-dot electronic viewfinder gives impressive resolution, colour accuracy, contrast and refresh rate, but the most interesting point about the EVF is its positioning.

Increasingly more compact cameras try to cram in a viewfinder somewhere, so users have an alternative to the LCD. This usually means the viewfinder is small and positioned on the far left of the camera. This can make it awkward to use, and any eyecup – if it exists at all – is so small it can allow light to ingress, making visibility poor in certain conditions. Canon has placed a large EVF directly over the lens, making it the centrepiece of the design. This placement does increase the size of the camera, but it also adds to the DSLR-like feel that Canon is aiming to achieve.

I found myself using the EVF far more than I did the LCD, and having used many compact cameras this is the first time I've defaulted to the viewfinder rather than it being my second choice.

All the information a user is likely to need is displayed in the viewfinder. One really neat feature is that if the camera is turned to portrait format, all the information flips around with it – a feature that's usually reserved for high-end CSCs.

There's also a seriously good LCD panel on the G5 X. This 3in, 1.04-million-dot touchscreen is one of the highest-specification screens we've seen on a compact camera. Being fully articulated, it can be used to shoot from high or low vantage points, as well as being able to shoot at arm's length.

I found the touchscreen also improved the handling of the camera. Most notably, I love the ability to use single point AF and simply assign the focus point using the touchscreen. It was handy to launch the quick menu on-screen and touch whatever setting I wanted to change, without having to mess around with a D-pad to navigate to certain options.

There's a range of information on the different

Focal points

With its SLR-style design, the G5 X has lots of external controls for such a small camera

Micro USB charging

In an unusual move for Canon, the Canon PowerShot G5 X can be charged via micro USB, allowing users to top up the battery using a power bank.

Connectors

On the left side of the camera is a flap that covers HDMI and micro USB ports, and a 2.5mm socket that accepts Canon's RS-60E3 cable release.

Customisable controls

The front, rear and lens-scroll dials can all be changed independently. This allows users to assign settings such as ISO, shutter speed and aperture to their preferred button.

Exposure-compensation dial

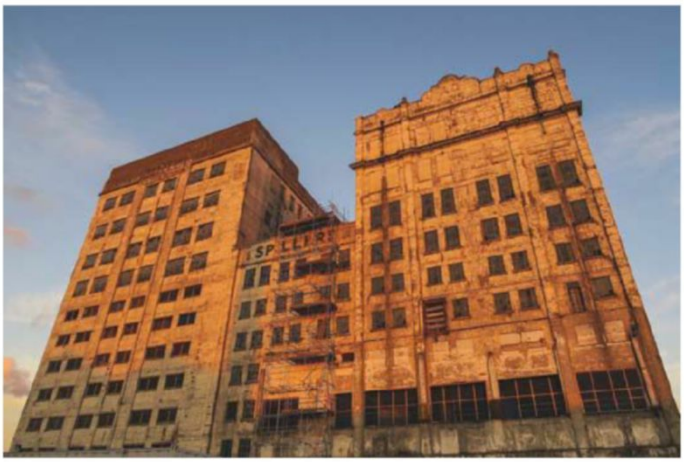
On top of the camera is a designated exposure-compensation dial, which is controllable to ±3EV in ⅓-stop increments.

Electronic viewfinder

Directly above the lens is a 2.36-million-dot OLED electronic viewfinder that boasts a refresh rate of 120fps.

Fully articulated touchscreen display

The 3in fully articulated touchscreen display has a resolution of 1.04 million dots.



AWB and evaluative metering perform fantastically with little need to adjust

shooting screens of the G5 X, but the most interesting for enthusiast photographers is the live histogram and the automatic level gauge provided by a built-in gyroscopic sensor. This provides very useful information for the more discerning photographer.

Autofocus

Canon's Artificial Intelligence Auto Focusing system (AiAF) is on board the G5 X, with 31 contrast detection focus points. It's designed to analyse scenes and identify the subject to achieve a better focusing performance. There's a host of options in the focusing menu, including face detection AF, face select, track, 1-point AF and touch AF.

As you would expect there are options for one-shot – Canon's term for single focus – and Ai Servo, which is Canon's term for continuous focusing. In both modes I found the focusing to be perfectly adequate for day-to-day shooting in moderate light, but the contrast-detection focus system has issues with low-contrast scenes, especially in low light.

The focus-assist beam certainly improves things, but it's still rather slow, especially at the telephoto end. Occasionally, the focusing will hunt for an area, fail to find the subject, illuminate the focus point as green and just stop trying. This means you have to restart your focusing, which can be a bit annoying. Overall, though, while it's certainly not the fastest, it's not terrible, and for the vast majority of situations it's unlikely to cause a real problem.

Manual focusing has a few nice features. In the menus, it's possible to turn on focus peaking, which will highlight high-contrast edges to indicate when a subject is in or near optimum focus. Also, manual focus can be assigned to different control wheels. By default, the focusing is set to the D-pad scroll wheel at the rear of the camera, but I found assigning it to the lens control ring gave an almost mechanical feel to it, and meant I could use the viewfinder at the same time.

Metering

Throughout my time using the PowerShot G5 X, I rarely needed to correct the metering. The only time it really needed to be changed was when I wanted to intentionally under or overexpose an image.

For the most part, I used evaluative metering, but the touchscreen makes spotmetering much more usable. I also found it very useful for high-contrast scenes that surpass the dynamic range of the camera.

White balance and colour

Straight out of the camera, the JPEG images are very bright and punchy. Skin tones are rendered particularly well and even cold wintry scenes have a colourful charm about them.

In a wide range of lighting conditions, the auto white balance was consistent and accurate, and the presets are also spot on.

There are a variety of picture styles for the JPEG images on the PowerShot G5 X, including landscape, portrait and vivid. Sometimes I like to shoot with a picture style such as monochrome. However, I also want the raw version, because if it's a good shot I like to be able to process it the best I can. When shooting raw + JPEG, however, picture style is annoyingly greyed out in the menu. AP

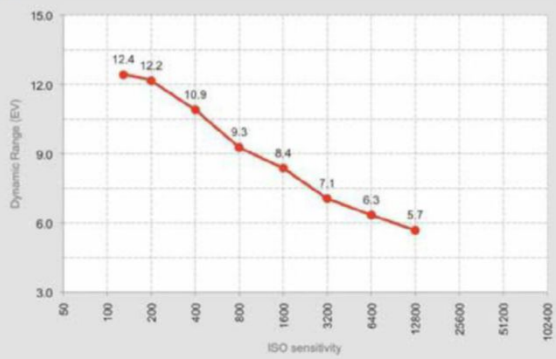
Lab results

Andrew Sydenham's lab tests reveal just how the camera performs

JUST as we've seen in many compact cameras before it, the Canon PowerShot G5 X has a 20.2-million-pixel BSI CMOS sensor. As we would expect, it's a solid performer. Being 1in, it's as big or bigger than that found in the majority of compact cameras, allowing for better signal-to-noise ratio compared to smaller-sensor compacts.

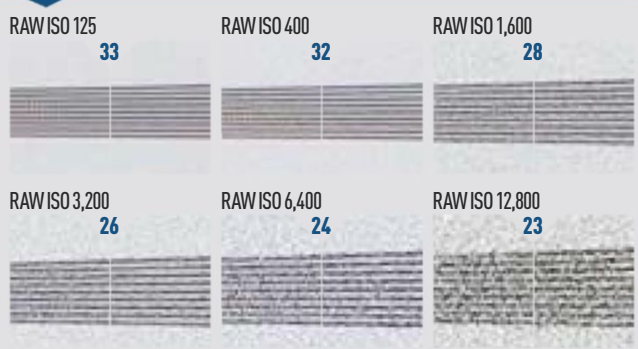
At low ISO sensitivity settings up to around ISO 800 there's plenty of detail with very little noticeable luminance noise, unless you are looking at pixel level. Detail starts to drop after ISO 1,600, and when reaching ISO 6,400 the pictures are obviously very noisy. While Canon's in-camera noise processing smooths most of it out, this is at the expense of much of the detail. However, to Canon's credit JPEGs do tend to give strong, attractive and punchy colour rendition, with well-judged auto white balance.

Dynamic range



It should come as no surprise to see that the G5 X gives similar dynamic range results to other cameras that use the same 20.2-million-pixel, 1in sensor, according to our Applied Imaging tests. Values above 12EV at sensitivities of ISO 200 and below are very impressive, meaning that plenty of highlight and shadow detail should still be retained in raw files. Increase the sensitivity further and dynamic range naturally falls further, but it's only above ISO 1,600 that it drops below 8EV.

Resolution



When it comes to resolution, the G5 X gets about as much out of its sensor as we could hope for, continuing the trend established by the G7 X and G3 X. At its base sensitivity of ISO 125 it resolves around 3,300l/ph and drops only slightly at ISO 400 to 3,200l/ph. Beyond this, noise has an increasing impact on resolution, but even at ISO 1,600 results are very credible. However, at higher settings the sensor's ability to register fine detail deteriorates more quickly, and by ISO 12,800 resolution has dropped to just 2,300l/ph.

Amateur Photographer IQ Image Engineering

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Noise

Both raw and JPEG images taken from our diorama scene are captured at the full range of ISO settings. The camera is placed in its default setting for JPEG images. Raw images are sharpened and noise reduction applied, to strike the best balance between resolution and noise.

RAW ISO 125

RAW ISO 400

RAW ISO 1,600

RAW ISO 3,200

RAW ISO 6,400

RAW ISO 12,800

At low ISO settings, the Canon PowerShot G5 X gives excellent images with plenty of detail and little noise. Increase the sensitivity to ISO 400 and a some noise starts to appear in the darker tones of the image, but you're unlikely to see it appearing in prints. Indeed, files are still very usable at ISO 800, particularly if you're prepared to shoot and process raw files. In comparison, Canon's standard JPEG processing tends to blur away fine details, while struggling to suppress low-frequency green and purple colour blotching in the shadows. Stick with raw, though, and it's only at ISO 1,600 that noise starts to have a significant impact on fine detail. At ISO 3,200 there's a stronger drop in image quality, with shadow detail noticeably deteriorating, but it's still fine for non-critical uses. However, the two highest settings give high noise levels and should be used only when there's no other choice.

The competition

Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 IV

Price £760
Lens 24-70mm equiv f/1.8-2.8
Sensor 20.1MP, 1in

The RX100 IV is smaller and boasts a more advanced sensor than the G5 X, giving much faster shooting. However, it doesn't have the same advanced controls and the EVF is only pop-up.

Panasonic Lumix DMC-LX100

Price £520
Lens 24-74mm equiv f/1.7-2.8
Sensor 12.8MP, Four Thirds

The Panasonic LX100 has a mult-aspect-ratio sensor, a full set of analogue controls and an excellent viewfinder, which makes it a very attractive option for the enthusiast photographer.

Fujifilm X30

Price £285
Lens 28-112mm equiv f/2-2.8
Sensor 12MP, 2/3in

Although it features a smaller, 2/3in X-Trans CMOS II sensor, the Fujifilm X30 has a respectable zoom range, superb EVF, great colour rendition and costs around £285.

Our verdict

SONY has led the way in the enthusiast compact market since the launch of the Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 several years ago. The 1in sensor was a game changer, but manufacturers such as Panasonic and Canon are snapping at the RX100's heels.

Canon's first attempt was the PowerShot G7 X, and while it boasts a decent lens and good image quality, it's somewhat sluggish in operation and lacking a viewfinder. However, with the G5 X Canon has ticked all the right boxes on the enthusiast's wish list. Its handling makes it truly feel like a serious camera that's easily comparable to a high-end CSC or even a DSLR. This is mostly due to the 2.36-million-dot OLED EVF, which is large, positioned perfectly, and has a 120fps refresh rate with great colours and contrast.

With the rear thumb grip and rubberised grip at the front, the camera feels very comfortable to shoot with. It's also impressive in terms of image quality, giving good, clean results right up to ISO 800. Image quality deteriorates thereafter, but usable shots can be made right up to ISO 3,200, with ISO 6,400 being a bit of a gamble. The dynamic range at low sensitivities is very impressive and at ISO 400 it's still respectable.

For the most part, the Canon PowerShot G5 X is either on a par with or better than its competition, although burst speed and autofocus are its downfall. Taking more than a second to shoot, buffer and save a raw file can be frustrating, and while the autofocus is acceptable for the majority of situations, it's not super-fast, especially in low light.

For many users, though, the continuous shooting rate and super-fast autofocusing won't be a priority from a pocket camera such as this. The G5 X is aimed at the enthusiast photographer who doesn't want to carry a DSLR, but still wants a camera to handle like one without comprising heavily on image quality. For a user who wants that level of handling, excellent image quality and a fast lens with a good zoom range, then the G5 X is a sound choice.

FEATURES	8/10
BUILD & HANDLING	9/10
METERING	9/10
AUTOFOCUS	8/10
AWB & COLOUR	8/10
DYNAMIC RANGE	8/10
IMAGE QUALITY	8/10
VIEWFINDER/LCD	9/10

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The sweet spot of edge-to-edge sharpness is found between f/4 and f/5.6

Fujinon XF 35mm f/2 R WR

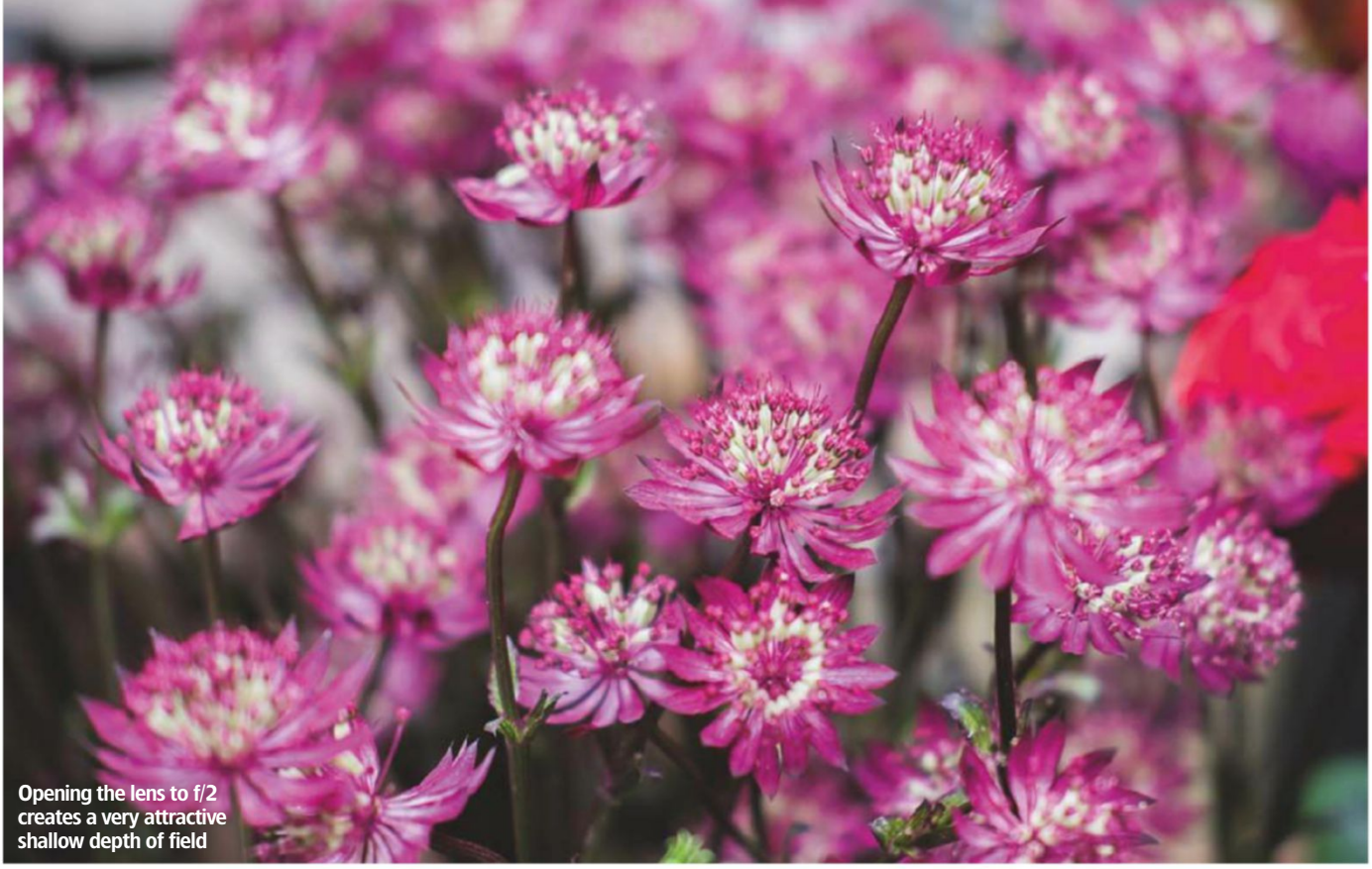
Michael Topham pairs the XF 35mm f/2 R WR up with Fujifilm's X-T10 to find out how it shapes up against the older XF 35mm f/1.4 R

Fujifilm has always been open about its plans for future lenses and the development of new optics. The manufacturer's roadmaps offer a great clue as to what we can expect to see in the future, and one lens we've been eager to get our hands on ever since the first rumours started circulating is the Fujinon XF 35mm f/2 R WR. As many X-series users will be aware, Fujifilm already has a wide-aperture 35mm lens in its range of XF prime lenses, which begs the question, why the need for another?

You'll instantly notice that the XF 35mm f/2 R WR has a different design compared with the three-year-old XF 35mm f/1.4 R. Although the maximum aperture is a stop slower, the lens is lighter and has been made smaller to make sure it's a good match with all cameras in Fujifilm's X-series, including the smallest entry-level models. As anyone who has used the older XF 35mm f/1.4 R will know, it will take something special to beat this stellar lens, which has dropped below £300 thanks to a recent Fujifilm cashback promotion. With the XF 35mm f/1.4 R at a tempting price and the arrival of the XF 35mm f/2 R WR, X-series users searching for a 35mm prime lens have a tough decision to make.

Features

The attraction of the XF 35mm f/2 R WR is its focal length, which presents a natural



Opening the lens to f/2 creates a very attractive shallow depth of field

perspective. With the 1.5x crop factor taken into consideration, the lens is equivalent to 53mm in 35mm film terms. As briefly touched upon, the aperture doesn't open as widely as the older XF 35mm f/1.4 R, but the motive behind making the front element smaller and limiting the maximum aperture to f/2 has played its role in making sure it is compact and lighter.

The construction of the lens is made up of nine elements in six groups, with two elements being of the aspherical type. This is a more complex arrangement than the eight elements in six groups found within the XF 35mm f/1.4 R. The new lens features a greater number of diaphragm blades, too (nine as opposed to seven), which should see it render rich circular bokeh when the lens is used at wide apertures.

On the underside of the barrel you'll find that it's labelled as a weather-resistant lens. This is one of the key attributes of this lens and its weather-resistant design is made up of eight seals to protect it from rain, dust and humid environments, which can often force us to stow our kit away to prevent damage.

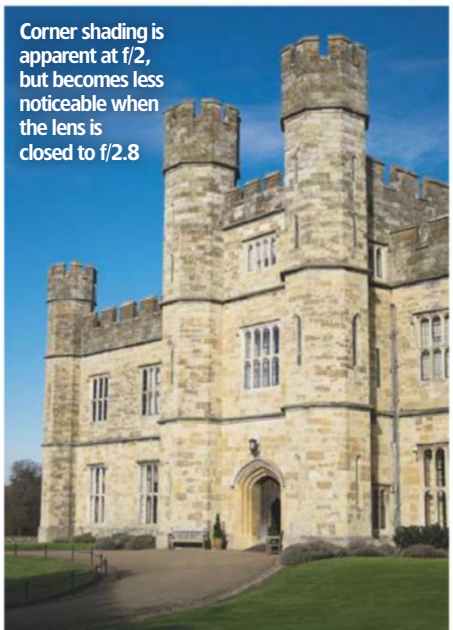
Like other Fujinon primes, the XF 35mm f/2 R WR doesn't feature optical image stabilisation. This shouldn't be frowned upon, as optically stabilised 35mm lenses are fairly uncommon and it's a feature that's not always deemed entirely necessary on a lens of this focal length where minor movements of the camera can cause fewer disturbances. Compare the minimum focusing distance of this lens to the XF 35mm f/1.4 R and it's the older model that has the edge. While the new lens has a near-focus limit of 35cm, the XF 35mm f/1.4 R can focus within 30cm.

The internal focusing system prevents the front element from moving, and the fact that it accepts filters and adapters via a small 43mm thread means that any accessories you do buy for it are likely to be slightly cheaper. The lens comes supplied with a lightweight and compact circular lens hood that screws into the front of the lens, but for those who'd prefer a more robust one there's also a stylish metal hood (LH-XF35-2) available for £40. Both hoods are designed in such a way they allow the front lens cap to be used when they're attached.

'Its weather-resistant design is made up of eight seals'

Autofocus

The focusing performance on this new lens is far superior to that of the XF 35mm f/1.4 R. Internal focusing prevents the front of the barrel protruding like it does on the older lens and, unlike the XF 35mm f/1.4 R, which is renowned for making some rather loud whirring noises as it focuses, this newer lens is much quieter. It's not just quieter – it's faster, too. Switching back and forth between old and new revealed the focusing speed on this lens is in an entirely different league. When partnered with the X-T10, it latched onto subjects accurately and responsively in a fraction of the time that it took to find focus using the XF 35mm f/1.4 R. Fujifilm has rated the autofocus acquisition speed at 0.08sec and it feels just as rapid as this in use.



Corner shading is apparent at f/2, but becomes less noticeable when the lens is closed to f/2.8

Build and handling

Fujinon prime lenses have a reputation for being engineered to a high standard and the XF 35mm f/2 R WR is no exception. It is solidly made, and its metal and glass construction gives it the sort of premium feel you want from a lens that is built to last. There's a difference in diameter between the rear and the front of the lens, resulting in the aperture ring being slightly larger than the manual focus ring in front. The lens looks smart attached to X-series cameras, and doesn't look or feel out of place when it's coupled to the smallest entry-level models, such as the X-A2. Our review sample was supplied in black, but those who chose their X-series camera in silver will be glad to know this lens is also available in silver to match.

The quality of this lens isn't just in its appearance, though, it also operates precisely and smoothly. The aperture ring clicks through its range in ⅓-stop increments, and rather than having little rotational resistance as there is on the XF 35mm f/1.4 R, there's a firmer feel when it's turned. The same can be said about the manual-focus ring. It's not as loose as on the 35mm f/1.4 and feels much more refined. One possible explanation for the improved feel of both the aperture and manual-focus rings is the addition of internal weather seals. When you uncouple the lens from the camera, you'll notice a rubber ring at the rear that effectively seals it against the metal lens mount.

The absence of switches on the barrel preserves a clean and minimalist appearance. While it is a smaller and more compact lens, I found the difference in weight was negligible when comparing it to the XF 35mm f/1.4 R.

The new XF 35mm f/2 R WR produces slightly sharper results than the older XF 35mm f/1.4 R at f/2

Image quality

Fujifilm X-series users will want to know how well the new lens fares against the XF 35mm f/1.4 R. I'm glad to report that the new model is an optically sound lens that delivers some seriously decent results. Running a series of comparison tests with both 35mm lenses set to the same aperture revealed that the new XF 35mm f/2 R WR produces fractionally sharper results in the centre of the frame when the aperture value was set to f/2. That said, corner sharpness struggles to match the same level of sharpness as the centre, so it's worth remembering to compose subjects as central to the frame as possible when shooting wide open.

Repeating the comparison process after stopping both lenses down to f/4 and f/5.6, I found my results were as sharp as each other across the frame. Diffraction starts to soften the finest detail at f/11 and f/16, so to preserve optimum sharpness from edge-to-edge users will ideally want to shoot between f/4 and f/5.6.

The new lens vignettes more than the XF 35mm f/1.4 R wide open, with corners appearing approximately 0.9EV darker than the centre at f/2. This vignetting isn't overly offensive, though, and it's quickly removed by stopping the lens down to f/2.8. Chromatic aberrations are handled reasonably well, with only minor purple and green fringing being traced along high-contrast edges. Vignetting and chromatic aberrations should be a quick one-click fix as soon as a lens profile is made available as part of an Adobe update.

Distortion was well controlled on the XF 35mm f/1.4 R, so how does it compare on this lens? Whereas the older 35mm f/1.4 is prone to modest barrel distortion, this lens produces a negligible amount of pincushion distortion. This was auto corrected in JPEG files thanks to the X-T10's effective in-camera processing. While not immediately obvious in raw files, users will be able to correct for distortion in the future by enabling a lens profile. AP

Our verdict

HAVING extensively tested this lens, I can say with confidence that it's up there as one of my favourite X-series lenses. Yes, it's a stop slower than the XF 35mm f/1.4 R, but its petite size is perfectly matched to X-series cameras such as the X-T10 and X-T1. The fact it's less bulky makes the camera feel just that little bit more comfortable to carry around, and the tactile feel of the aperture and manual-focus rings makes it pleasing to operate. Centre sharpness is magnificent at f/2, and it goes about its business of focusing in an ultra-quiet and super-responsive manner. Add weather-resistance to the mix and you've got an incredibly powerful lens that looks great, feels great and has the performance to match. It's a multi-purpose lens that's perfect for street, portraiture and reportage photography, and at £300 it's a fantastic entry point for X-series users looking to purchase their first prime lens. Unless you need the extra stop that the XF 35mm f/1.4 R provides, I'd settle for this lens ahead of it.

Data file

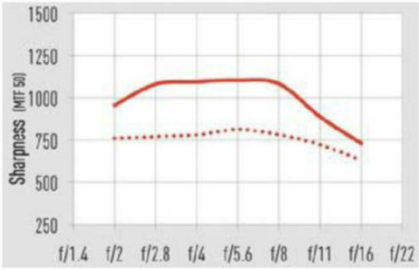
Price £299
Filter diameter 43mm
Lens elements 9
Groups 6
Aperture f/2-16
Minimum focus distance 35cm
Dimensions 60x45.9mm
Weight 170g
Lens mount Fujifilm X-Mount

Amateur Photographer Testbench GOLD ★★★★★

Fujifilm XF 35mm f/2 R WR

Resolution

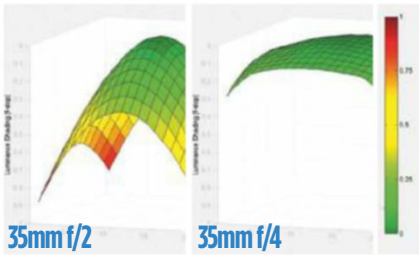
The lens produces impressive sharpness in the centre of the frame at f/2, and continues to get sharper when the aperture is closed down. There's a jump in sharpness by stopping the lens down to f/2.8 and the centre remains consistently sharp up to f/8. The sweet spot of edge-to-edge sharpness is found at f/5.6. Diffraction gradually starts to have an effect on the level of sharpness beyond f/8.



35mm centre — 35mm corner ····

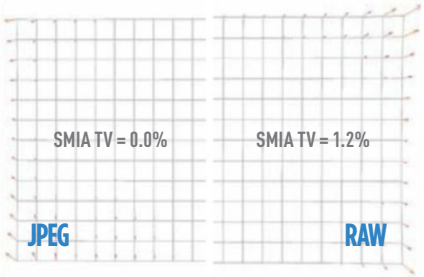
Shading

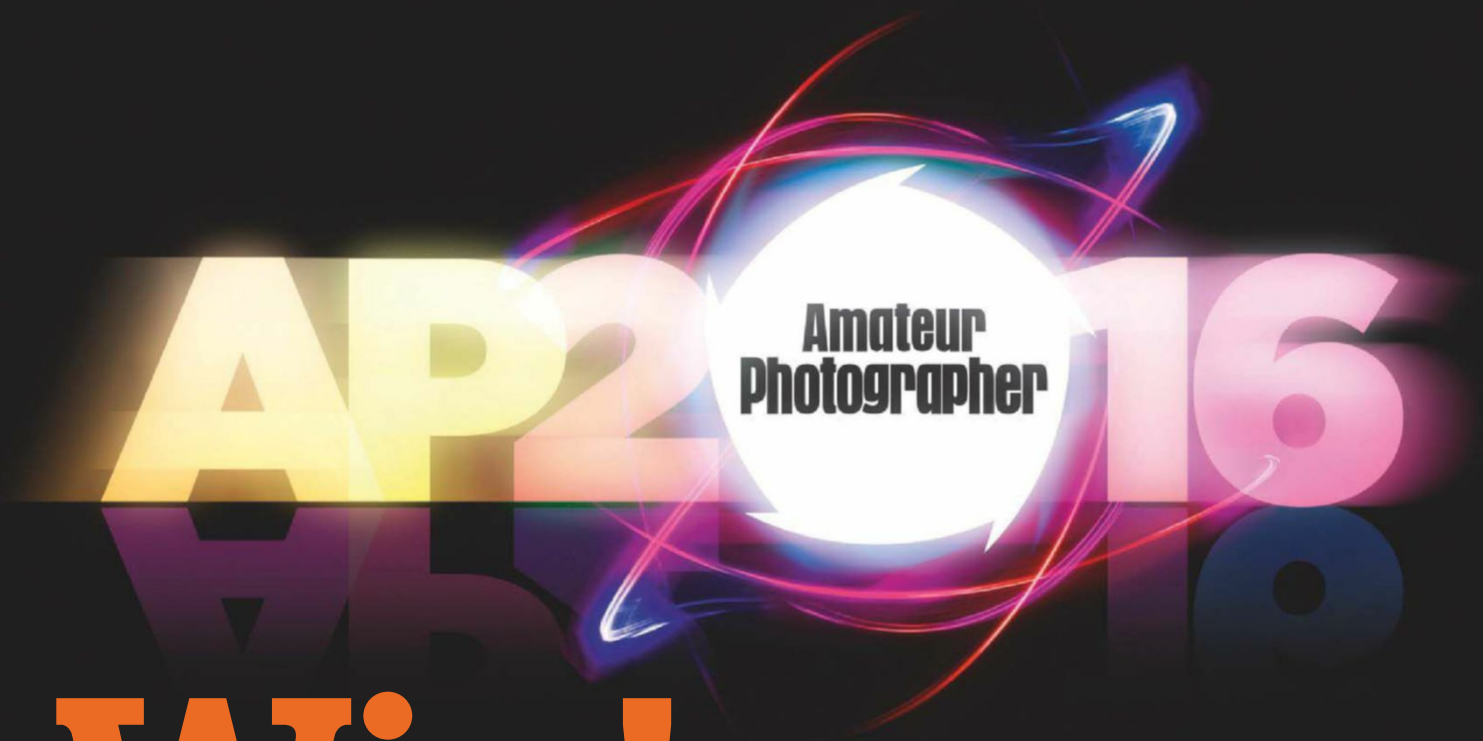
Vignetting is apparent in images taken at f/2, with corners appearing approximately 0.9EV darker than at the centre of the frame. Corner shading improves quickly by stopping the lens down. At f/2.8 the edges appear less than 0.5EV darker than the centre, which I latterly discovered to be barely noticeable in real-world images.



Curvilinear distortion

A study of our distortion chart revealed the lens exhibits signs of pincushion distortion, whereby straight lines towards the edge of the frame bow inwards. Interestingly, this is a different result to the Fujinon XF 35mm f/1.4 R lens, which we found produced a negligible amount of barrel distortion in our curvilinear distortion comparison tests.





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The Fujifilm X-T10's dials take a bit of getting used to

Fujifilm dial operation

Q I'm a Canon DSLR user and have been looking to buy a smaller CSC for some time. During the recent black Friday deals I treated myself to a Fujifilm X-T10. I'm thrilled with the camera, but there's one thing that niggles me. Why is it that the front and rear dials seem to operate back to front? On my Canon DSLR I'm used to scrolling to the right to increase variables such as ISO, but on the X-T10 I have to scroll to the left. It seems odd to me and makes switching between cameras difficult.
Geoff Moore

A I use a Canon DSLR and Fujifilm X-E2 and have experienced the same issue you describe. It took me a while to get used to bumping the rear control dial to the left to increase ISO – I agree that it feels more natural to bump it to the right to increase the value, much like we do on our Canon DSLRs. The same can be said for other settings in Fujifilm's Quick Menu. For example, to adjust highlight tonality from 0 to -2, you need to bump the switch to the right, where you'd naturally assume you'd bump it to the left to dial in a negative value. Interestingly, both dials work in the correct sense during playback and navigating the menu system.

I don't have an answer as to why Fujifilm has designed its dials to operate the way they do, but I'd like to see Fujifilm add an option to change this within the main menu. There is an option to change the direction the focus ring operates between clockwise and counterclockwise, which suggests it wouldn't be too difficult to add a similar setting to control how the dials operate when they're used in the Quick Menu. I'm sure we're not the only Fujifilm users who hope a firmware update might solve this issue in the future.
Michael Topham

An EVF implementation

Q My bridge camera is ten years old. I have been scouring retailers for a replacement of any type with an EVF, in case this oldie gives up on me at some point. However, its EVF does appear to be unusual. An example may explain why. I wanted to take a good photo of a grey squirrel eating the food set out for the birds outside the kitchen window. I set the camera up on the tripod with aperture priority. I panned the focus spot to the squirrel and started by setting the aperture so I could see a fair amount of bokeh in the background.

I then set the ISO to give me a reasonable shutter speed with the aperture above. I panned the metering spot round the scene, watching how the exposure varied, with overexposed areas clearly indicated by zebra patterns, adjusting the white balance but only if necessary re-adjusting the aperture or shutter speed. When I had the scene looking the way I wanted, I locked the exposure.

Then I panned the focus point to the squirrel's eye and locked by half pressing the shutter button. I recomposed and fully pressed to write the file to the memory card.

There's no need to review because what I see is what I get, and also, what I didn't see (and accepted – underexposed or overexposed) I won't get unless recoverable in raw. This is not to be confused with 'Live View'. It is more 'Live, Live View' or 'Living View'.

As an IT worker, I have an idea how my old camera does this. What I think it does in effect is split the 'feed' from the processor, allowing it to be switched to the EVF or to the memory card. The EVF does not try to emulate what the sensor sees through the lens, only what the processor is outputting. If there isn't enough light the EVF stays black. This EVF implementation would at best be only a viewer mode because it can't predict flash and the

Mirror or not?

Q I see your review of the Leica SL (AP 12 December 2015) states that it's only the second full-frame so-called 'mirrorless' system. But what about the Leica M9 and Leica M (Typ 240) rangefinder cameras? They don't have mirrors, do they? **Trenton Tompkinson**

A This question of terminology crops up from time to time, and the answer is simple. 'Mirrorless' doesn't mean 'not an SLR', but refers specifically to modern digital interchangeable-lens cameras that use the main imaging sensor for focusing (both auto and manual), metering and electronic viewing. Leica's digital M cameras don't meet these criteria, but instead are correctly referred to as rangefinders, just as they always were. To be pedantic, their rangefinder mechanisms contain mirrors, so technically they're not mirrorless anyway.

The term 'mirrorless' came into widespread use after Panasonic launched the first camera of this type, the Lumix DMC-G1, in 2008. In the UK such cameras are commonly called compact system cameras, but in the US mirrorless is the preferred term. For some reason the acronym previously favoured on the internet, based on 'electronic viewfinder interchangeable lens', never made it past the manufacturers' marketing departments. **Andy Westlake**

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above functions are quite slow, a non-starter for action photos.

For my limited artistic ability and range of landscape and architectural subjects my dream camera would be this oldie with twice the megapixels, a higher resolution EVF to see things better, such as bokeh, and ten years' worth of electronic speed-up.

I've deliberately not mentioned the camera make and model for reasons of objectivity, although someone may be able to identify it.
Peter White

© PETER WHITE

Peter White's squirrel image, taken with his ten-year-old bridge camera

A It seems to me as if you're looking for an EVF camera with a specific set of features, namely depth of field preview to visualise background blur, exposure simulation with overexposure warning to avoid highlight clipping and flexible focus point positioning. The good news is that the majority of modern cameras can do this, although perhaps not in exactly the same way. For example, you may have to press or hold down a button to see a depth of field preview, and you'll almost certainly have to turn on overexposure warning in the menus. AF area positioning may be more or less circuitous, depending on the brand.

Likewise, while you can check exposure by panning a metering spot around the frame, it can often be just as easy to set the camera to the composition you want and apply exposure compensation to get the desired result. As long as the camera can accurately represent how bright your image will turn out and which (if any) areas of the image will clip to white, that should be sufficient to judge the exposure.

Overall, the ability to previsualise how your image will turn out is one of the biggest strengths of cameras with EVFs. It's usually just a matter of working out exactly how each model works and setting it up to suit your needs.
Andy Westlake

HOW IT WORKS

I am your Viewfinder dioptre correction adjustment

TODAY, all but the least sophisticated cameras that offer an eye-level viewfinder will also feature a facility to adjust the viewfinder optics to ensure the sharpest view. This is called dioptre correction or compensation, and the power of this correction depends on an individual's eyesight and whether glasses are being worn.

For long-distance, mid-range or reading/close-distance vision, if your eyes can't refocus adequately you will need optical correction in the form of glasses to bring what you want to see into a range that makes it possible for your eyes to focus. This is exactly what dioptre correction does. A viewfinder is usually set at a virtual 1m or so 'distance'. If your eye can't focus to that distance easily, then a dioptre correction can help. If you wear glasses for distance vision, then focusing to 1m may not be possible; a dioptre correction will ensure anything that is sharp in the viewfinder is also sharp to the viewer with their glasses on.

Dioptre correction has been available for decades, originally in the form of supplementary lenses either built in to eyecups, or screw-in or clip-on viewfinder lenses supplied in a range of negative and positive powers. Most cameras with viewfinders now offer an integrated dioptre-correction system that can be adjusted and fine-tuned without the need for accessories. You simply turn a small wheel or move a slider back and forth until the view is sharpest.

By convention, the corrective power is set to -1 in viewfinders. Confusingly, this is what will be indicated as '0' or the centre point of the adjuster on the camera. You can usually bias the adjustment by at least 2 dioptres below and above the centre point, or between -3 and +1.

For most people with normal sight or wearing correctly prescribed glasses, the adjustment will be not need to move from '0' (-1 dioptre) and for most others the built-in correction range will be adequate. For extreme cases, an additional power of correction in the form of a screw-in or clip-on dioptre lens may be required. Standard finder correction lens can't correct for astigmatism.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Praktica L

Ivor Matanle extols the virtues of this East German workhorse

LAUNCHED 1970

PRICE AT LAUNCH £34.56 (1972)

GUIDE PRICE TODAY £25-£50

THE PRAKTICA L was the first of the renowned Praktica L series – tough, no-nonsense 35mm SLRs with all that was necessary for quality photography, and little that wasn't. As the originator of the series, the Praktica L carried this principle to what many people thought was the extreme by not even having a built-in exposure meter. It is a true traditionalists' camera. I am almost ashamed that I never owned one before now, because we were made for each other.

The shutter of the Praktica L series is a tough, vertically travelling, metal-bladed focal-plane type with speeds of 1sec-1/1000sec, with flash synchronisation at 1/125sec.

The camera also has the Praktica quick-load system, which is very similar to, and seems just as effective as, the Canon QL system.

What's good Simplicity, reliability, finish (mine is black).

What's bad Not much.

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In the bag

Award-winning landscape photographer Justin Minns shows what he takes with him on a shoot. www.justinminns.co.uk

© JUSTIN MINNS

Canon EOS 5D Mark II

1 Although in camera terms the Canon EOS 5D Mark II is getting on a bit, it's still a very capable performer. Image quality is excellent and file size more than adequate, so as long as mine is still going strong I can't find a good enough excuse to upgrade.

Canon EF 16-35mm f/4L IS

2 This is a peach of a lens – well built, weather sealed and a focal-length range I find perfect for landscapes. It's sharp all the way across the frame, captures plenty of detail and as an added bonus it renders lovely sharp sunbursts.

Infrared-converted Fujifilm X-Pro1

3 Carrying an infrared-converted camera gives me more options in the sort of bright light that isn't always ideal for landscape photography. This converted X-Pro1 is lightweight and the quality of the prime lenses is superb.

Lee Filters

4 I use mainly hard graduated filters and neutral-density filters, but also have a set of soft graduated filters and a circular polariser. Lee filters are the best I have come across – the system is well designed and the filters are neutral, with excellent clarity. I carry two holders – one fitted with a polariser adapter and one with an extra slot.

Gitzo GT3542XLS Systematic tripod

5 It's not the lightest in the range, but this Gitzo Series 3 tripod is very sturdy and adjusts from towering above my head to bumping into daisies with the minimum of fuss. On top is a Manfrotto 410 Junior geared head, which makes precise adjustments very easy. It's one of my favourite bits of kit.

List of kit Canon EOS 5D Mark II, Canon EF 16-35mm f/4L IS, Canon EF 24-105mm f/4L IS, Canon EF 100-400mm f/4-5.6 L IS, Fujifilm X-Pro1 (infrared converted), Fujifilm 14mm f/2.8, Fujifilm 35mm f/1.4, Think Tank pouch with CF cards, batteries etc, Gitzo Series 3 Systematic tripod and Manfrotto Junior geared head, set of Lee filters and two holders, Petzl head torch, travel towel, Lowepro Whistler backpack

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AF-S 35mm f1.8G DX	£139.00	AF-S 400mm f/2.8 FL ED VR	£10,399.00	AF-S 24-120mm f/4G ED VR	£749.00
AF-S 40mm f/2.8G ED	£185.00	AF-S 500mm f/4G ED VR	£5,849.00	AF-S 28-300mm ED VR	£659.00
AF 50mm f/1.4D	£244.00	AF-S 500mm f/4E FL ED VR	£8,149.00	AF-S 55-200mm f/4-5.6G VR II	£229.00
AF-S 50mm f/1.4G	£275.00	AF-S 600mm f/4G ED VR	£6,899.99	AF-S 70-200mm f/2.8 VR II	£1,579.00
AF-D 50mm f/1.8	£109.00	AF-S 600mm f/4E FL ED VR	£9,649.00	AF-S 70-200mm f/4.0 ED VR	£899.00
AF-S 50mm f/1.8G	£140.00	AF-S 800mm f/5.6E FL ED VR	£13,994.00	AF-S 70-300mm IF ED VR	£406.00
AF-S 58mm f/1.4G	£1,135.00	AF-S 10-24mm f/3.5-4.5G	£639.00	AF-D 80-400mm ED VR	£939.00
AF-D 60mm f/2.8 Micro	£368.00	AF-S 12-24mm f/4 G IF-ED	£859.00	AF-S 80-400mm ED VR	£1,799.00
AF-S 60mm f/2.8G Micro ED	£369.00	AF-S 14-24mm f/2.8G ED	£1,315.00	AF-S 200-400mm VR II	£4,899.00

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20mm f/2.8 USM	£385.00	200mm f/2.0L IS USM	£4,399.00	EF-S 18-135mm IS STM	£329.00
24mm f/1.4L Mk II USM	£1,199.00	200mm f/2.8L USM/2	£569.00	EF-S 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6	£385.00
24mm f/2.8 IS USM	£455.00	300mm f/2.8L USM IS II	£4,799.00	24-70mm f/2.8L II USM	£1,400.00
EF-S 24mm f/2.8 STM	£129.00	300mm f/4.0L USM IS	£959.00	24-70mm f/4.0L IS USM	£699.00
28mm f/1.8 USM	£379.00	400mm f/2.8L USM IS II	£7,698.00	24-105mm f/4.0L IS USM	£749.00
28mm f/2.8 IS USM	£389.00	400mm f/4.0 DO IS II	£6,999.00	24-105mm (White Box)	£729.00
35mm f/1.4L USM	£989.00	400mm f/5.6L USM	£889.00	24-105mm f/3.5-5.6 IS STM	£375.00
35mm f/1.4L II USM	£1,799.99	500mm f/4.0L IS MK II	£6,899.00	28-300mm f/3.5-5.6L IS	£1,795.00
35mm f/2.0 IS USM	£399.00	600mm f/4.0L IS MK II	£8,895.00	EF-S 55-250mm f/4-5.6 IS STM	£225.00
40mm f/2.8 STM	£129.00	800mm f/5.6L IS USM	£9,899.00	70-200mm f/2.8L IS II USM	£1,499.00
50mm f/1.2 L USM	£995.00	TSE 17mm f/4.0L	£1,599.00	70-200mm f/2.8L USM	£945.00
50mm f/1.4 USM	£237.00	TSE 24mm f/3.5L II	£1,479.00	70-200mm f/4.0L IS USM	£805.00
50mm f/1.8 II	£88.00	TSE 45mm f/2.8	£1,099.00	70-200mm f/4.0L USM	£459.00
50mm f/1.8 STM	£107.00	TSE 90mm f/2.8	£1,124.00	70-300mm f/4.0-5.6 IS	£368.00
50mm f/2.5 Macro	£201.00	8-15mm f/4L Fisheye USM	£915.00	70-300mm f/4.0-5.6L IS USM	£904.00
EF-S 60mm f/2.8 Macro	£314.00	EF-S 10-18mm IS STM	£189.00	70-300mm DO IS USM	£1,118.00
MP-E 65mm f/2.8	£853.00	EF-S 10-22mm f/3.5-4.5	£410.00	75-300mm f/4.0-5.6 III	£188.00
85mm f/1.2L II USM	£1,499.00	EF 11-24mm f/4L USM	£2,799.00	75-300mm f/4.0-5.6 III	£219.00
85mm f/1.8 USM	£237.00	EF-S 15-85mm f/3.5-5.6 IS	£531.00	100-400mm L IS USM II	£1,899.00
100mm f/2 USM	£358.00	16-35mm f/2.8L II USM	£1,064.00	200-400mm f/4.0L USM	£8,598.00
100mm f/2.8 USM Macro	£373.00	16-35mm f/4.0L IS USM	£721.00	1.4x III Extender	£314.00
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16 MEGA PIXELS | 35 mm f/1.7 ASPH

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Nikon

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D3300 Body **£248**

D3300 Body	£248
£228 Inc. £20 Cashback*	
D3200 Body	£237
D3200 + 18-55mm f3.5-5.6 VR II	£279

Nikon D5500 *Black or Red*
24.2 megapixels | 5.0 fps | 1080p movie mode | £50 CASHBACK*

D5500 Body **£499**

D5500 Body	£499
£449 Inc. £50 Cashback*	
D5300 Body	£389
£349 Inc. £40 Cashback*	

Nikon D7100
24.1 megapixels | 6.0 fps | 1080p movie mode

D7100 From **£619**

D7100 Body	£619
D7100 + 18-105mm VR	£799

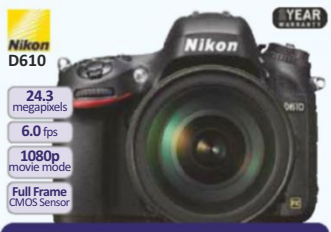
CUSTOMER REVIEW: D7100 Body
'Quality bit of kit! Love it!' *Fang! – Warwickshire*

Nikon D7200
24.2 megapixels | 6.0 fps | 1080p movie mode

D7200 From **£752**

D7200 Body	£752
D7200 + 18-105mm	£929

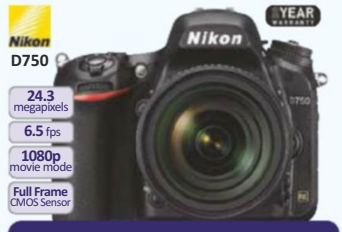
Read our D7200 review on our blog at wex.co.uk/blog



Nikon D610
24.3 megapixels | 6.0 fps | 1080p movie mode | Full Frame CMOS Sensor

D610 From **£999**

D610 Body	£999
D610 + 24-85mm	£1499



Nikon D750
24.3 megapixels | 6.5 fps | 1080p movie mode | Full Frame CMOS Sensor

D750 From **£1499**

D750 Body	£1499
D750 + 24-85mm	£1759
D750 + 24-120mm	£1999

Nikon D810
36.3 megapixels | 5.0 fps | Full Frame CMOS Sensor

D810 From **£2349**

D810 Body	£2349
D810A Body	£2699

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Nikon D4s
16.2 megapixels | 11.0 fps | Full Frame CMOS Sensor

D4s Body **£4449**

D4s Body	£4449

CUSTOMER REVIEW: D4s Body
'Spectacular Camera' *Charlie Delta – Hertfordshire*

Nikon winter Cashback* offer ends 13.1.16

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42.4 megapixels | 5.0 fps | 4K Video

A7R II **£2599**

A7R II Body	£2599
A7S II Body	£2499
A7R Body	£999
A7 II Body	£1189
£1144 Inc. £100 Cashback*	

A6000 *Black or Silver*
24.3 megapixels | 11.0 fps | 1080p movie mode | £50 CASHBACK*

A6000 From **£439**

A6000 Body	£439
£389 Inc. £50 Cashback*	
A6000 + 16-50mm PZ	£489
£439 Inc. £50 Cashback*	

A77 II
24.3 megapixels | 12.0 fps | 1080p movie mode

A77 II From **£764**

A77 II Body	£764
A77 II + 16-50mm	£1199
A58 + 18-55mm + 55-200mm	£399

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- Sony FE 16-35mm f4.0 ZA OSS ZA Vario Sonnar T* £1079
- Sony FE 24-70mm f4.0 ZA OSS ZA Vario-Tessar Carl Zeiss T* £749
- Sony FE 70-200mm f4.0 G OSS £1005

RECOMMENDED LENSES:
- Sony 70-400mm f4-5.6 G SSM II . £1509
- Sony 70-300mm f4.5-5.6 G SSM . £689
- Sony 28-75mm f2.8 SAM £569
- Sony 35mm f1.8 DT SAM £149

Sony Cashback* offer ends 31.1.16

Panasonic

GH4
16.05 megapixels | 12.0 fps | 4K Video | £100 CASHBACK*

GH4 From **£899**

GH4 Body	£899
£799 Inc. £100 Cashback*	
GH4R Body	£1049
£949 Inc. £100 Cashback*	
G7 Body	£467
£367 Inc. £100 Cashback*	
G7 + 14-140mm	£694
£594 Inc. £100 Cashback*	

GX8 *Silver or Black*
20.03 megapixels | 8.0 fps | 4K Video | up to £150 CASHBACK*

GX8 From **£789**

GX8 Body	£789
£739 Inc. £50 Cashback*	
GX8 + 14-140mm	£1139
£1019 Inc. £120 Cashback*	
GX8 + 12-35mm	£1449
£1349 Inc. £150 Cashback*	
GX7 + 14-42mm	£433
GX7 + 20mm	£499

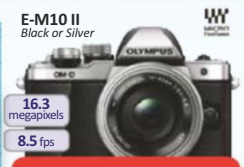
Panasonic Cashback* offer ends 25.1.16

OLYMPUS

OM-D E-M1 *Black or silver*
16.3 megapixels | 10.0 fps | 1080p movie mode | £100 CASHBACK* + FREE grip

OM-D E-M1 From **£849**

OM-D E-M1 Body	£849
£749 Inc. £100 Cashback*	
OM-D E-M1 + 12-50mm	£999
£899 Inc. £100 Cashback*	
OM-D E-M1 + 12-40mm	£1264
OM-D E-M5 II Body	£769
OM-D E-M5 II + 12-40mm	£1349
OM-D E-M5 II + 12-50mm	£970
OM-D E-M10 + 14-150mm II WEX EXCLUSIVE	£599



E-M10 II *Black or Silver*
16.3 megapixels | 8.5 fps

E-M10 II From **£549**

OM-D E-M10 II Body	£549
OM-D E-M10 II + 14-42mm	£649

RECOMMENDED LENSES:
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- Olympus 60mm f2.8 Macro £349
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PENTAX

K-3 II
24.3 megapixels | 8.3 fps | 1080p movie mode | FREE 50mm lens*

K-3 II From **£749**

K-3 II Body	£749
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K-3 II + 18-135mm	£999
K-3 II + 16-85mm	£999
K-3 Body	£659
K-3 + 18-135mm	£939
K-50	£339
K-S1	from £399
K-S2	from £529

Pentax* offer ends 16.1.16

FUJIFILM

X-E2 *Black or Silver*
16.3 megapixels | 7.0 fps | FREE lens*

X-E2 From **£499**

X-E2 Body + Free lens	£499
X-E2 + 18-55mm + Free lens	£689
X-Pro1	£452
X-T1 Body	£805
£730 Inc. £75 Cashback*	
X-T1 + 18-135mm	£1100
£1025 Inc. £75 Cashback + Free Grip*	

X-T10 *Black or Silver*
16.3 megapixels | 8 fps | 1080p movie mode | £40 CASHBACK*

X-T10 From **£450**

X-T10 Body	£450
£410 Inc. £40 Cashback*	
X-T10 + 18-55mm + 55-200mm XF	£999
£959 Inc. £40 Cashback*	

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- 90mm f2 R LM WR XF £637.50
- £562.50 Inc. £75 Cashback* .....
- 56mm f1.2 APD XF £999
- £924 Inc. £75 Cashback* .....

Fuji Free lens & Cashback* offer ends 11.1.16

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50.6 megapixels | 5.0 fps | 1080p movie mode

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CUSTOMER REVIEW: EOS 70D + 18-135mm IS STM
★★★★★ 'An excellent step up'
Adam – Portsmouth

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6D Body £1119
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5D Mark III Body **£2249**

5D Mark III Body **£2249**

CUSTOMER REVIEW: EOS 5D Mk III Digital SLR Camera
★★★★★ 'You haven't got one? Get one!'
Roland – Northampton

Canon PRO

EOS 1Dx

18.1 megapixels | 12.0 fps | Full Frame CMOS sensor

1Dx Body **£4399**

1Dx Body **£4399**

CUSTOMER REVIEW: EOS 1D X Digital SLR Camera Body
★★★★★ '...bought this as an upgrade to the 5D Mk 2 and have never looked back.' *Dave – Cornwall*

Canon winter Cashback* offer ends 13.1.16
Canon lens bundle Cashback† offer ends on 31.1.16

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Canon Cashback* offer ends 13.1.16

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40-150mm F2.8 M.Zuiko Pro - Olympus	£999.00
45mm F2.8 Elmarit Pro - Leica	£159.00
49mm Circular Polarizer - Kood	£5.00
50-135mm F2.8 DX ATX - Tokina (Canon EOS)	£379.00
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50mm F1.4 EX DG HSM - Sigma (Canon EOS)	£279.00
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50mm F2 ZF.2 Macro - Zeiss	£879.00
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8x42 BRF Geovid HD - Metres - Leica	£1,349.00
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Cognac Wrist Strap (X Vario) 18783 - Leica	£49.00
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Di466 Flashgun Black - Olympus - Nissin	£64.00
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E49 UV/IR - Black - Leica	£69.00
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Leica M Neoprene Case (Large) 14868 - Leica	£37.00
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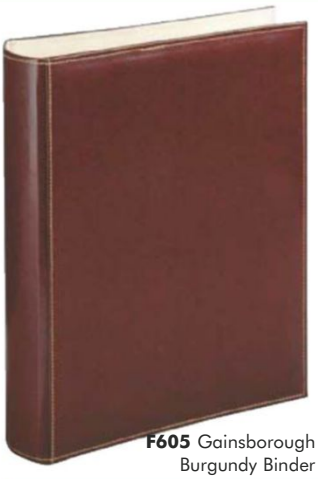

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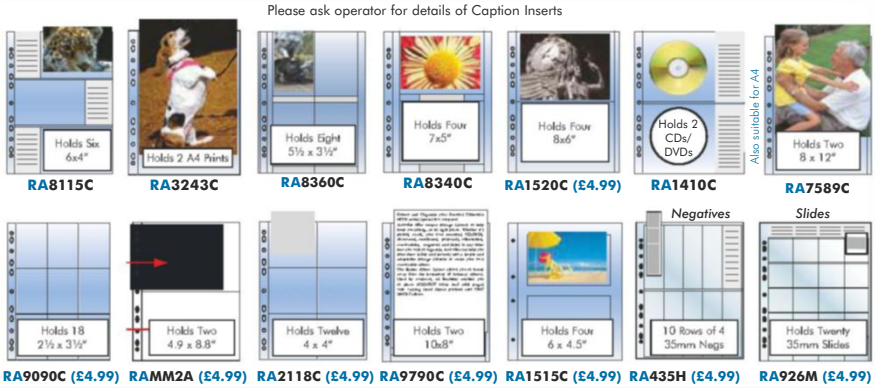

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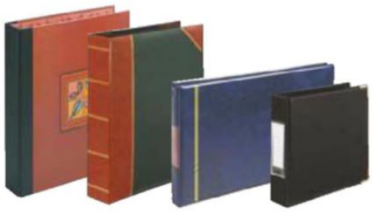

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PGi550/CLi551XL Set of 5 £19.99
BCi6 Colours 15ml £2.99
PG40 Black 28ml £12.99
CL41 Colour 24ml £16.99
PG50 Black 28ml £12.99
CL51 Colour 24ml £14.99
PG510 Black 11ml £13.99
CL511 Colour 11ml £15.99
PG512 Black 18ml £13.99
CL513 Colour 15ml £15.99
PG540XL Black 21ml £13.99
CL541XL Colour 15ml £14.99
PG545XL Black 15ml £11.99
PG546XL Black 21ml £12.99

Many more in stock!

EPSON

No.16 Fountain Pen Inks
Originals:
No.16 Set of 4 £22.99
No.16 Black 5.4ml £7.99
No.16 Colours 3.1ml each £5.99
No.16XL Set of 4 £42.99
No.16XL Black 12.9ml £14.99
No.16XL Colours 6.5ml each £11.99
Compatibles:
No.16 Set of 4 £14.99
No.16 Black 12ml £3.99
No.16 Colours 12ml each £3.99

No.18 Daisy Inks
Originals:
No.18 Set of 4 £22.99
No.18 Black 5.2ml £7.99
No.18 Colours 3.3ml each £5.99
No.18XL Set of 4 £42.99
No.18XL Black 11.5ml £14.99
No.18XL Colours 6.6ml each £11.99
Compatibles:
No.18 Set of 4 £14.99
No.18 Black 12ml £3.99
No.18 Colours 12ml each £3.99

No.24 Elephant Inks
Originals:
No.24 Set of 6 £41.99
No.24 Colours 4.6ml each £7.99
No.24XL Set of 6 £64.99
No.24XL Colours 8.7ml each £11.99
Compatibles:
No.24 Set of 6 £22.99
No.24 Black 7ml £3.99
No.24 Colours 7ml each £3.99

No.26 Polar Bear Inks
Originals:
No.26 Set of 4 £29.99
No.26 Black 6.2ml £8.99
No.26 Colours 4.5ml each £7.99
No.26XL Set of 4 £49.99
No.26XL Black 12.1ml £14.99
No.26XL Colours 9.7ml each £13.99
Compatibles:
No.26 Set of 4 £14.99
No.26 Black 10ml £3.99
No.26 Colours 7ml each £3.99

T0481-T0486 Seahorse Inks
Originals:
Set of 6 £69.99
Colours 13ml each £16.99
Compatibles:
Set of 6 £19.99
Colours 13ml each £3.99

T0541-T0549 Frog Inks
Originals:
Set of 8 £105.99
Colours 13ml each £14.99
Compatibles:
Set of 8 £27.99
Colours 13ml each £3.99

T0591-T0599 Lily Inks
Originals:
Set of 8 £89.99
Colours 13ml each £11.99
Compatibles:
Set of 8 £27.99
Colours 13ml each £3.99

More Epson inks >>>

Albums & Frames

We now stock a comprehensive range of frames, mounts, albums and accessories. The full range can be viewed on our website, with detailed close-up images of each product to help you choose the perfect way to display your printed photographs. Below is just a tiny sample of what we offer:

Grace Albums Available in Burgundy or Blue.

Emilia Frames Distressed wood shabby chic effect. Blue or White.

Travel Albums Over a dozen designs in stock.

Rio Frames Handcrafted solid wood with 30mm wide profile, in four colours.

Grafton Albums Available in Burgundy or Blue.

Frisco Frames Simple, basic design available in a huge range of sizes & colours.

Baby Albums Multiple different designs available.

Memo Style Albums:
Grace 6x4 100 photos £5.99
Grace 6x4 200 photos £9.99
Grace 6x4 300 photos £14.99
Grace 7x5 100 photos £7.99
Grace 7x5 200 photos £13.99
Grace A4 100 photos £15.99
Grafton 6x4 200 photos £9.99
Grafton 7x5 200 photos £13.99
Baby 6x4 200 photos £9.99
Travel 6x4 200 photos £8.99

Traditional Style Albums:
Grace 29x32cm 100 pages £14.99
Grafton 29x32cm 100 pgs £14.99
Baby 29x32cm 100 pages £12.99

Accessories:
Photo Corners Pack of 250 £2.99
Photo Stickers Pack of 500 £1.99

Plastic Bevel, Glass Front:
Frisco 6x4 seven colours £1.99
Frisco 7x5 seven colours £2.29
Frisco 8x6 seven colours £2.79
Frisco 9x6 seven colours £3.49
Frisco 10x8 seven colours £3.79
Frisco 12x8 seven colours £4.59
Frisco A4 seven colours £3.99
Frisco A3 seven colours £8.99

Wood Bevel, Glass Front:
Emilia 6x4 two colours £4.99
Emilia 7x5 two colours £5.99
Emilia 8x6 two colours £6.99
Emilia 10x8 two colours £7.99
Emilia 12x8 two colours £8.99
Rio 6x4 four colours £5.99
Rio 7x5 four colours £6.99
Rio 8x6 four colours £7.99
Rio 10x8 four colours £8.99
Rio 12x8 four colours £9.99

More Ink Cartridges...

EPSON

T0711-T0714 Cheetah Inks
Originals:
Set of 4 £32.99
Black 7.4ml £8.99
Colours 5.5ml each £8.99
Compatibles:
Set of 4 £14.99
Black 7.4ml £4.99
Colours 5.5ml each £3.99

T0791-T0796 Owl Inks
Originals:
Set of 6 £72.99
Colours 11.1ml each £12.99
Compatibles:
Set of 6 £19.99
Colours 11.1ml each £3.99

T0801-T0806 Hummingbird Inks
Originals:
Set of 6 £49.99
Colours 7.4ml each £8.99
Compatibles:
Set of 6 £19.99
Colours 7.4ml each £3.99

T0871-T0879 Flamingo Inks
Originals:
Set of 8 £66.99
Colours 11.4ml each £9.99
Compatibles:
Set of 8 £27.99
Colours 11.4ml each £3.99

T0961-T0969 Husky Inks
Originals:
Set of 8 £69.99
Colours 11.4ml each £8.99
Compatibles:
Set of 8 £27.99
Colours 11.4ml each £3.99

T1571-T1579 Turtle Inks
Originals:
Set of 8 £149.99
Colours 25.9ml each £18.99

T7601-T7609 Killer Whale
Originals:
Set of 9 £169.99
Colours 25.9ml each £18.99

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Originals:
No.38 Colours 27ml each £26.99
No.62XL Black 12ml £21.99
No.62XL Colour 11.5ml £23.99
No.300 Black 4ml £10.99
No.300 Colour 4ml £12.99
No.301 Black 3ml £9.99
No.301 Colour 3ml £11.99
No.301XL Black 8ml £18.99
No.301XL Colour 6ml £18.99
No.350 Black 4.5ml £11.99
No.351 Colour 3.5ml £14.99
No.363 Black 6ml £13.99
No.363 C/M/Y/PC/PM each £9.99
No.363 SET OF 6 £39.99
No.364 Black 6ml £7.99
No.364 PB/C/M/Y 3ml each £6.99
No.364 SET OF 4 £21.99
No.364XL Black 14ml £13.99
No.364XL PB/C/M/Y 6ml each £12.99
No.364XL SET OF 4 £49.99
No.920XL SET OF 4 £46.99
No.932XL SET OF 4 £43.99
No.950XL SET OF 4 £69.99
Compatibles:
No.15 Black 46ml £4.99
No.21 Black 10ml £7.99
No.22 Colour 21ml £11.99
No.45 Black 45ml £4.99
No.56 Black 24ml £9.99
No.57 Colour 24ml £12.99
No.78 Colour 36ml £9.99
No.110 Colour 12ml £10.99
No.300XL Black 18ml £14.99
No.300XL Colour 18ml £16.99
No.301XL Black 15ml £14.99
No.301XL Colour 18ml £16.99
No.337 Black 21ml £10.99
No.338 Black 21ml £10.99
No.339 Black 34ml £12.99
No.343 Colour 21ml £12.99
No.344 Colour 21ml £14.99
No.348 Photo 21ml £12.99
No.350XL Black 30ml £14.99
No.351XL Colour 20ml £16.99
No.363 Black 20ml £6.99
No.363 Colours 6ml each £4.99
No.363 SET OF 6 £24.99
No.364 Black 10ml £4.99
No.364 Colours 5ml each £3.99
No.364 SET OF 4 £15.99
No.364XL Black 18ml £8.99
No.364XL Colours 11ml each £7.99
No.364XL SET OF 4 £31.99
No.920XL SET OF 4 £19.99
No.932XL SET OF 4 £29.99
No.940XL SET OF 4 £29.99
No.950XL SET OF 4 £29.99

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Photo Papers

We carry a massive range of papers (sheets & rolls) at competitive prices. Below are some examples of the selection we stock.

Ilford Galerie

Photo Glossy 160gsm:
6x4 50 sheets +50 FREE £3.99
A4 100 sheets £12.99
Photo Satin 200gsm:
6x4 100 sheets +100 FREE £9.99
A4 100 sheets +100 FREE £19.99
Photo Glossy 200gsm:
6x4 100 sheets +100 FREE £9.99
A4 20 sheets £6.99
Premium Pearl 270gsm:
6x4 50 sheets +50 FREE £6.99
A4 20 sheets +20 FREE £8.99
Premium Gloss 270gsm:
A4 25 sheets OFFER £8.99
A3 25 sheets OFFER £15.99
A3+ 25 sheets OFFER £19.99
Smooth Pearl 310gsm:
6x4 100 sheets £14.99
7x5 100 sheets £17.99
A4 25 sheets £12.99
A4 100 sheets £39.99
A4 250 sheets £84.99
A3 25 sheets £25.99
A3+ 25 sheets £35.99
17" Roll 30 metres £69.99
24" Roll 30 metres £96.99
Smooth Gloss 310gsm:
6x4 100 sheets £14.99
7x5 100 sheets £17.99
A4 25 sheets £12.99
A4 100 sheets £39.99
A3 25 sheets £25.99
A3+ 25 sheets £35.99
Premium Matt Duo 200 gsm:
A4 50 sheets £12.99
A3+ 50 sheets £34.99
Heavy Duo Matt 310gsm:
A4 50 sheets £17.99
A3+ 50 sheets £44.99
Gold Fibre Silk 310gsm:
A4 50 sheets £37.99
A3+ 50 sheets £89.99
Gold Mono Silk 270gsm:
A4 25 sheets £16.99
A3+ 25 sheets £42.99

Fotospeed

Smooth Pearl 290gsm:
6x4 100 sheets £12.99
7x5 100 sheets £16.99
A4 50 sheets £17.99
A3 50 sheets £34.99
A3+ 25 sheets £25.99
Panoramic 25 sheets £26.99
17" Roll 30 metres £68.99
24" Roll 30 metres £85.99
PF Lustre 275gsm:
6x4 100 sheets £12.99
7x5 100 sheets £16.99
A4 50 sheets £17.99
A3 25 sheets £35.99
A3+ 50 sheets £47.99
Panoramic 25 sheets £26.99
17" Roll 30 metres £69.99
24" Roll 30 metres £86.99
PF Gloss 270gsm:
A4 50 sheets £17.99
A3 50 sheets £35.99
A3+ 50 sheets £47.99
Panoramic 25 sheets £26.99
Matt Ultra 240gsm:
A4 50 sheets £12.99
A3 50 sheets £26.99
A3+ 50 sheets £35.99
Fine Art / Fibre Base Papers:
Baryta A4 20 sheets £21.99
Bartya A3 20 sheets £42.99
Etching A4 25 sheets £19.99
Etching A3 25 sheets £34.99
Smooth Cotton A4 25 sh £24.99
Smooth Cotton A3 25 sh £51.99

Canon

PP-201 Plus Glossy II 275gsm:
6x4 50 sheets £9.99
7x5 20 sheets £11.99
A4 20 sheets £11.99
A3 20 sheets £27.99
A3+ 20 sheets £36.99
PT-101 Pro Platinum 300gsm:
6x4 20 sheets £7.99
A4 20 sheets £16.99
A3 20 sheets £37.99
A3+ 10 sheets £24.99
SG-201 Semi-Gloss 260gsm:
6x4 50 sheets £9.99
A4 20 sheets £11.99
A3 20 sheets £27.99
A3+ 20 sheets £42.99
LU-101 Pro Lustre 260gsm:
A4 50 sheets £14.99
A3 50 sheets £32.99
A3+ 50 sheets £49.99

Parma Jet

Smooth Pearl 280gsm:
6x4 100 sheets £12.99
7x5 100 sheets £18.99
A4 50 sheets £18.99
A4 50 sheets £18.99
A3 50 sheets £35.99
A3+ 25 sheets £28.99
17" Roll 30 metres £64.99
24" Roll 30 metres £89.99
Ultra Pearl 295gsm:
6x4 100 sheets £14.99
7x5 100 sheets £20.99
A4 25 sheets £12.99
A3 25 sheets £22.99
A3+ 25 sheets £30.99
13" Roll 10 metres £21.99
17" Roll 30 metres £68.99
24" Roll 30 metres £92.99
Titanium Lustre 280gsm:
A4 25 sheets £22.99
A3 25 sheets £44.99
A3+ 25 sheets £62.99
Oyster 271gsm:
6x4 100 sheets £12.99
7x5 100 sheets £18.99
A4 50 sheets £18.99
A3 25 sheets £22.99
A3+ 25 sheets £28.99
13" Roll 10 metres £26.99
17" Roll 30 metres £64.99
24" Roll 30 metres £89.99
Gloss 271gsm:
6x4 100 sheets £12.99
7x5 100 sheets £18.99
A4 50 sheets £18.99
A3 25 sheets £22.99
A3+ 25 sheets £28.99
13" Roll 10 metres £26.99
17" Roll 30 metres £64.99
24" Roll 30 metres £89.99
Matt Plus 240gsm:
6x4 100 sheets £10.99
7x5 100 sheets £13.99
A4 50 sheets £13.99
A3 25 sheets £17.99
A3+ 25 sheets £22.99
13" Roll 10 metres £24.99
17" Roll 30 metres £42.99
24" Roll 30 metres £58.99
Matt Proofing 160gsm:
A4 150 sheets £18.99
A3 75 sheets £22.99
17" Roll 30 metres £26.99
24" Roll 30 metres £36.99
Double Sided Matt 250gsm:
A4 100 sheets £24.99
A3 50 sheets £27.99
Fine Art / Fibre Base Papers:
FB Gold Silk A4 25 sh £23.99
FB Gold Silk A3 25 sh £47.99
FB Distinction A4 25 sh £25.99
FB Distinction A3 25 sh £48.99
FB Royal A4 25 sheets £28.99
FB Royal A3 25 sheets £56.99
FB Gloss A4 25 sheets £26.99
FB Gloss A3 25 sheets £51.99
FB Matt A4 25 sheets £19.99
FB Matt A3 25 sheets £38.99
Artist A4 25 sheets £22.99
Artist A3 25 sheets £39.99
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Museum A3 25 sheets £48.99
Parchment A4 25 sheets £22.99
Parchment A3 25 sheets £39.99
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Omega A3 25 sheets £46.99
Portrait A4 25 sheets £26.99
Portrait A3 25 sheets £53.99
Portrait White A4 25 sh £26.99
Portrait White A3 25 sh £49.99

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7x5 30 sheets £9.99
A4 15 sheets +15 FREE £9.99
A3 20 sheets £29.99
A3+ 20 sheets OFFER £24.99
Ultra Gloss 300gsm:
6x4 50 sheets £9.99
7x5 50 sheets £12.99
A4 15 sheets £11.99
Premium Semi-Gloss 251gsm:
6x4 50 sheets £8.99
A4 20 sheets £14.99
A3 20 sheets £29.99
A3+ 20 sheets OFFER £24.99
Archival Matte 192gsm:
A4 50 sheets £14.99
A3 50 sheets £33.99
A3+ 50 sheets £44.99
Heavyweight Matte 167gsm:
A4 50 sheets £11.99
A3 50 sheets £34.99
A3+ 50 sheets £44.99

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32GB £22.99
64GB £35.99
128GB £63.99

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16GB £6.99
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64GB £24.99

Sandisk Extreme
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128GB £82.99

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32GB £36.99
64GB £56.99

1066X (160MB/s)
16GB £33.99
32GB £56.99
64GB £99.99
128GB £192.99

Sandisk Ultra
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16GB £15.99
32GB £24.99

Sandisk Extreme
800X (120MB/s)
16GB £26.99
32GB £32.99
64GB £47.99
128GB £94.99

Sandisk Extreme Pro
1066X (160MB/s)
16GB £33.99
32GB £47.99
64GB £82.99
128GB £149.99

XQD Cards

Lexar Professional
1333X (200MB/s)
32GB £69.99
64GB £99.99

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Lexar Professional
633X (95MB/s)
32GB £21.99
64GB £43.99

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32GB £16.99
64GB £32.99

Sandisk Ultra
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Replacement rechargeable Li-ion batteries, manufactured by Hahnel or Blumax. All come with a two-year guarantee.

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AA Lloytron 2700mAh (4) £6.99
AAA Lloytron 1100mAh (4) £3.99

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CR2 Energizer (1) £1.99
2CR5 Energizer (1) £3.99
CRP2 Energizer (1) £3.99
CRV3 Energizer (1) £5.99
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CR2025, **CR2032** etc £1.99

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One of the largest ranges of screw-in threaded filters in the UK, from Hoya, Kood and Marumi. We carry sizes from 24mm, up to 105mm, and offer Clear Protectors, UVs, Skylights, Circular Polarisers, ND4s, ND8s, ND16s, ND32s, ND64s, ND500s, ND1000s, Variable NDs, Starbursts, Close Up Sets and more! Below are just a few examples...

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46mm £4.99
49mm £4.99
52mm £4.99
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58mm £6.99
62mm £7.99
67mm £8.99
72mm £9.99
77mm £11.99
82mm £14.99
86mm £19.99

KOOD Slim Frame
Circular Polarisers
37mm £12.99
40.5mm £12.99
46mm £12.99
49mm £12.99
52mm £14.99
55mm £15.99
58mm £17.99
62mm £19.99
67mm £22.99
72mm £26.99
77mm £29.99
82mm £34.99
86mm £39.99

KOOD
ND4 & ND8 Filters
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49mm £10.99
52mm £10.99
55mm £11.99
58mm £12.99
62mm £14.99
67mm £15.99
72mm £17.99
77mm £19.99
82mm £22.99

Marumi DHG Slim Frame Multi-coated
UV Filters
52mm £13.99
58mm £15.99
62mm £17.99
67mm £19.99
72mm £21.99
77mm £24.99

Marumi DHG Slim Frame Multi-coated
Circular Polarisers
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58mm £35.99
62mm £39.99
67mm £44.99
72mm £49.99
77mm £54.99
82mm £69.99

Hoya HMC Slim Frame
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37mm £12.99
40.5mm £12.99
46mm £12.99
49mm £11.99
52mm £11.99
58mm £14.99
62mm £16.99
67mm £18.99
72mm £21.99
77mm £25.99
82mm £29.99

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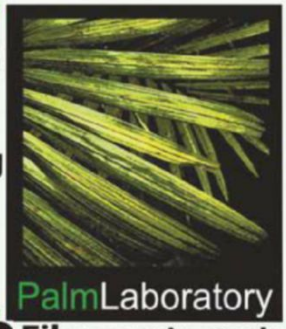

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Final Analysis

Roger Hicks considers...

'Ou Menya', 2008-2009, by Bieke Depoorter

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This is a charming picture, the sort that most of us would like to take of our daughters or granddaughters. There are probably those who would decry it as child pornography – she's got legs and you can see her knickers! – but you'd need to be more than puritanical to look at it that way. Behind the charm there are, however, at least four lessons.

The first is the cost in time, effort and money of a major picture series. In 2008, Bieke Depoorter was 22, working on her graduation thesis. She spent a month on the Trans-Siberian railway, getting off at random and relying on the kindness of strangers for accommodation. Speaking no Russian, she had a piece of paper with a Russian explanation of her project. She showed it to people, asking if she could stay with them for one night. At the end of the month, she went home, reviewed her pictures, decided that the most interesting were of people in their homes, and went back and repeated the whole exercise. Twice. I'm glad she's not my daughter, I'd have been worried sick. Then I'd have been very proud. You can see why if you go to www.biekedepoorter.com and look at the 'Ou Menya' series: it translates roughly as 'with me' or 'my place' or even 'it's mine'.

The second lesson is how women photographers can do some things that men can't, or at least, do them more easily. Women generally trust other women more than they trust men. This is why I chose this image: it's hard to imagine anyone allowing a male stranger to take it.

The third lesson is just how much the picture tells us about the world in general and Russia in particular. In general, in that people everywhere are pretty similar: you could find a very similar girl doing something very similar in any sufficiently wealthy country. More particularly, the Soviet Union is gone. Here we see a country in which a young girl has her own comfortable room and gadgets. The décor is, however, distinctly Russian, with a strong '70s feel about it – tastes change slower than incomes. Note the big old radiator, too, with its ancient large-bore plumbing: essential for a Russian winter.

The fourth lesson is that too many photography schools look more like finishing schools. It can't be easy to ignore the frivolities of some of your fellow students, and to concentrate on taking brilliant pictures. Ms Depoorter did. In 2012, she joined Magnum as a nominee; in 2014 she became an associate member. You don't get that just for turning up at school. AP

Roger Hicks has been writing about photography since 1981 and has published more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz (visit his website at **www.rogerandfrances.com**). Every week in this column Roger deconstructs a classic or contemporary photograph. **Next week he considers an image by Carl De Keyser**

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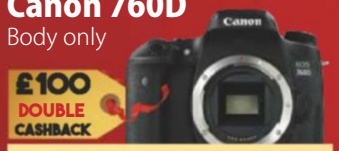

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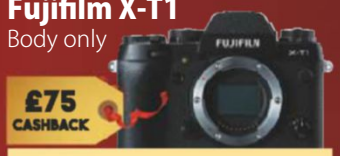

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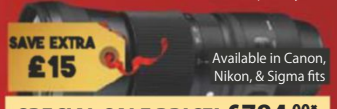

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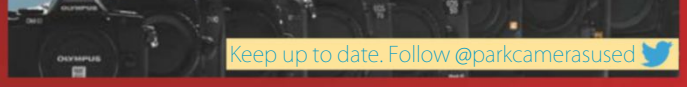

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